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COORDINATION QUESTIONS

Communication for development programmes in the
United Nations system

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/94/4).

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ANNEX

[Original: Arabic, Chinese,
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**COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM**

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Joint Inspection Unit



**Geneva
1994**

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Annex

The following conclusions can be drawn from the replies to the questionnaire sent to 15 United Nations specialized agencies, out of which 10 responded	1 - 11	31
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Acronyms

ACC	Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
ATRCW	African Training and Research Centre for Women
BPPE	Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation
CII	Communication, Information and Informatics
CPC	Committee for Programme and Co-ordination
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs
DPKO	Department of Peace-Keeping Operations
DSC	Development Support Communication
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IIP	Inter-governmental Informatics Programme
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPDC	International Programme for the Development of Communication
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
JUNIC	Joint United Nations Information Committee
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PGI	General Information Programme
PPCO	Policy and Programme Co-ordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDPI	United Nations Department of Public Information
UNDCP	United Nations Drug Control Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women-in-Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In today's world, more than ever before, the United Nations system has been given responsibilities in the field of development, humanitarian assistance in general and in connection with peace-keeping operations. The world has become more interdependent today than in the past, thus necessitating an efficient communication system to inform and alert the international community about the efforts being made by organizations of the United Nations system to meet the ever-increasing challenge in the above mentioned areas. It would, therefore, be difficult to under-estimate the importance of communication, and the need for intensified inter-agency co-operation in the field of communication for development. The most significant event in this context is the recent General Assembly document on "DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION - An agenda for development" (A/48/935 of 6 May 1994), in which the Secretary-General calls the attention of Member States on the importance of an issue more than ever crucial for the safeguard of peace and security.

At present, the situation regarding communication activities in the United Nations system is not satisfactory, nor is the level of inter-agency co-ordination keeping up with the evolution of communication discipline. In Article III.3 and Article V.5 of Resolution 4/21 of the UNESCO General Conference, and Resolution 34/182 adopted by the United Nations 34th General Assembly, the International Programme for the Development of Communication has been given the mission to work with specialized agencies and professional organizations on projects for the development of communication and their funding. But while all specialized agencies are invited to the Council meetings, few have actively participated and the far-reaching questions of inter-agency co-operation have not yet been addressed adequately. Nor is there any such forum to discuss the dimensions of communication in humanitarian assistance. It has been generally recognized that the mass media have not been sufficiently brought to bear on the extensive activities of the United Nations system in the field of development, implementation of projects and their impact on the quality of lives of recipients.

The reality of a world in rapid, constant evolution has put into perspective the strategic value of communication, especially dissemination of information and sharing of knowledge. Furthermore, to be effective communication must be a two-way process involving both dispensers and beneficiaries of information. It should lead to a consensus likely to satisfy the interest, needs and potentialities of all concerned. Social and economic factors properly emphasized become indispensable ingredients of any methods or techniques employed in development communication.

After a thorough research, analysis and interviews by the Inspector, the findings indicate that communication for development programmes do not feature as a priority theme for most of the agencies, with the exception of UNESCO, UNICEF and FAO. UNICEF considers communication for development programmes as a priority. They have communication officers in almost all their field offices, most

of them with very substantial programmes. The most significant lacuna in the development machinery of the United Nations system is that the UNDP modalities of project execution do not provide scope for a communication dimension.

There is, however, awareness and concern among United Nations agencies, universities, multilateral agencies and NGOs about the need for effective communication structures for attaining the desired objectives of development and humanitarian assistance programmes. Initiatives have been taken to put more emphasis on communication as a prerequisite for development. One of these initiatives was to organize a Round Table Conference whereby useful discussions could take place on how to make communication programmes more effective as well as how to co-ordinate the efforts of the different agencies to this effect.

While the above efforts at the headquarters level need to be commended and encouraged, the findings of the Inspector also indicate that most of the agencies seem to attach insufficient importance to communication in operational activities. Left to the initiative of the chief technical advisor of the project, communication is rarely integrated into the entire cycle of development assistance.

Some aspects of the problem of communication for development received limited recognition and attempts are being made to find suitable solutions. The structure for an efficient communication system for humanitarian assistance, in connection with the peace-keeping processes, however, is still at the rudimentary stage. The possibility of expanding the inter-agency round table conference on communication for development, to include communication for humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations should be considered. Through this report, the Inspector attempts to raise the opportunity for reflection on the present policies of organizations of the United Nations system dealing with communication for development, and makes the following ten recommendations as ways and means of improving the status of communication.

Recommendation 1 - Policy decisions and provision of resources for communication

In recognition of the fact that communication is a prerequisite for any programme of the United Nations system to succeed:

- (a) the policy of communication should be integrated within each department of an agency dealing with development and humanitarian assistance; and
- (b) the budgets of all the projects and programmes should contain a specific provision for communication activities.

Recommendation 2 - Location of Communication Units

The major role of communication in the United Nations system is to help programme managers to make their work understood primarily within their own organization, secondly among the sister agencies and most important of all by the beneficiaries. The task of information divisions is to disseminate information about the activities of the United Nations organizations. There is thus a clear distinction between the two disciplines. The present situation whereby communication units are located within the Information Division, with the exception of UNICEF where the Programme Communication and Social Mobilization Unit is located within the Programme division rather than the Information Division, diminishes the importance of communication, which is not exclusively public information. Communication units, therefore, should enjoy a certain autonomy and have direct functional relations with the various organizational offices dealing with field activities.

Recommendation 3 - Resources

Donor agencies should be invited to provide adequate resources to support and expand communication activities, in particular for participatory development initiatives.

Recommendation 4 - Co-ordination

In order to improve co-ordination in the area of communication by the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular those involved with development, action has to be taken on two levels: headquarters and country.

(a) **Headquarters:** An internal mechanism such as focal points, should be established whereby departments would inform each other about the work done on communication in their respective units. In addition, since communication is a management process, it has to be part of all undertakings. There should be a unit within the policy-making division of agencies which would assume the responsibility of co-ordinating communication activities. The same unit should be the link at the inter-agency level.

(b) **Country level:** Co-ordination at the country level should be practical and flexible in order to respond to "on-the-spot" situations. Greater co-ordination at the country level should be sought by using fully the team of agency representatives within the Resident Co-ordinator system. For this purpose and in co-operation with governments and other concerned parties, a Communication Co-ordinating Committee could be established including the Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) of the project, representatives from governments, bilateral donors, NGOs and community leaders. It could be entrusted with the task of formulating communication policies, following up the implementation of these policies and preparing a joint report on the contribution of communication to the success of the project.

Recommendation 5 - Co-operation with NGOs

Communication at the field level involving popular participation of beneficiaries via local and international NGOs is one of the ways of ensuring the effectiveness of technical co-operation. The United Nations system should work more closely with development-oriented NGOs at the grass-roots level which have already proved to have sound communication channels with the beneficiaries.

Recommendation 6 - Round Table Conference

At present, there is no regular forum whereby discussions are held and views exchanged on development and humanitarian assistance communication programmes. This has resulted in the evolution of an informal Round Table Conference for Development Communication. Consecutive Round Table meetings have demonstrated a considerable amount of goodwill for practical co-operation.

The commitment and productivity of the experts participation in the Round Tables have proved that times are ripe for a better organized system of co-ordination in order to cross agency boundaries which have been recognized as barriers. To achieve this objective, the existing informal Round Table process should be regularized. It should include all United Nations agencies, the regional economic commissions of the United Nations and take into account the mandate of UNESCO on communication.

Recommendation 7 - IPDC

The Inspector believes that in order to avoid duplication and promote a better use of resources, the Intergovernmental Council of IPDC should look into the mandate of IPDC in order to enable it to respond more effectively to the needs of developing countries in the field of infrastructure building and mass media training. In the process of introducing possible changes, the following points, among others, should be taken into account:

- (a) Improve the dissemination of information of IPDC programmes to agencies through more effective means of communication.
- (b) Ensure that development communication and training programmes attract more contributions from United Nations agencies, bilateral and multilateral organizations, NGOs, foundations and universities, in addition to the fund-raising efforts of IPDC.

Recommendation 8 - Training

- (a) Due to the fact that there is a lack of trained communication experts globally and in particular in developing countries, the organizations of the United Nations system should develop a systematic approach to training. Such training should benefit field workers/development agents, technicians, as well as communication planners and specialists at higher level.
- (b) Academic institutions in developing and developed countries should be encouraged to include curricula for development communication.
- (c) With the aim to cost saving, the use of existing infrastructures and facilities of the United Nations system, namely the ILO International Training Centre in Turin, should be considered by the appropriate ACC subsidiary body.
- (d) The fund for financing these training programmes should be envisaged within the communication component budget and be allocated at the inception of projects.

Recommendation 9 - ACC Classification

Because of the constant evolution in the field of communication and its strategic value in disseminating information and sharing knowledge, the ACC programme classification on communication extended for UNDP use should be redefined to respond to needs of the Members States. For this, in addition to the class entries proposed by UNESCO, FAO and UNFPA should also be consulted in order to ensure an integrated and harmonized set of categories.

Recommendation 10 - Peace-Keeping Operations

The United Nations has no specific structure in place for immediate action to deal with communication when a peace-keeping operation emerges. The Inspector, based on past experience, is convinced that it is imperative for the United Nations to have a stand-by unit equipped with a group of communication experts, which would be entrusted with the task of operating in the field from the beginning of the operation to cover the entire spectrum of communication/information requirements until the end of the operation. The Unit would be mobile and report directly to the head of DPKO. It should be established within the existing resources of DPKO and work very closely with UN/DPI, benefiting from its existing decentralized structure, representatives of agencies and other media fora to improve co-ordination among the parties acting at the field level. Depending on the nature of the peace-keeping operation, specialized agencies, UNESCO in particular because of its specific mandate, and NGOs should also be on call for the Secretary-General and ready to put at the disposal of the United Nations their expertise in this field.

Introduction

1. The notion of communication as considered in this report must not be confused with the technical means of communication such as telecommunications, informatics, postal services and similar devices, though they are indispensable vehicles to the dissemination of information and knowledge. Furthermore, the conceptual category of communication as specified in the title refers to development. In other words, this study deals with the central role of the discipline of communication for a successful implementation of development programmes and for an improvement of the interaction between actors in development, namely the United Nations system, governments, NGOs and the beneficiaries.

2. Because of this approach and in order to avoid overlapping, the JIU, under the guidance of the same Inspector, is preparing a separate study entitled "A review of Telecommunications and Related Information Technologies in the United Nations System". Although a sound telecommunication infrastructure is an essential support to development, the prevailing choice is in favour of a separate exploration of the subject. This is not only because of the specific suggestion which came from FAO, but also in consideration of the fact that the JIU has in the past undertaken two studies on the same topic entitled "Communication in the United Nations System" (JIU/REP/72/7 and JIU/REP/82/6). The rapid progress in technology and its bearing on the field of communications demand an updating on the subject which will be better tackled in a separate report.

3. As stated in Article I.2 of its Constitution, UNESCO is the principal United Nations Organization mandated to be responsible for communication. In addition, it also has the lead mandate in the field of social communication. UNESCO has, therefore, recognized, inter-alia, the need for a mechanism to co-ordinate communication activities through appropriate media and suggested to the JIU that it undertake a study on "Communication for Development Programmes in the United Nations System".

The terms of reference for the study are to:

- (a) analyze and evaluate existing informal arrangements for the co-ordination of communication at an inter-agency level;
- (b) develop proposals for an improved and more institutionalized mechanism to facilitate co-ordination; and
- (c) describe the particular dimension of communication and its specificity vis-a-vis other aspects of information technology, in particular informatics and telecommunications as support areas.

4. It is with this in mind and cognizant of the important evolution in the field of communication for development that the report will:

- (a) try to define the notion of communication for development and its dimension as an instrument for rallying communities to participate in development projects from assessed needs to implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- (b) look into the communication programmes of UNESCO;
- (c) examine the status of communication programmes of other agencies;
- (d) review previous attempts and existing informal arrangements for the co-ordination of communication programmes for development in the United Nations system;
- (e) examine the opportunity, evaluate the convenience and propose the setting-up of a more appropriate mechanism for enhancing co-operation among agencies;
- (f) consider how this mechanism could strengthen communication in humanitarian assistance activities and in peace-keeping operations; and
- (g) explore the possibility of cost saving aspects by using already-existing fora and facilities.

5. The methodology used for the preparation of the study was, mainly, visits by the Inspector to headquarters and field offices and analysis of replies to questionnaires provided by the specialized agencies: UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, United Nations/DPI, WFP, UNIDO, UNHCR, ILO, WHO, ITU, IMO, WMO, IAEA, ICAO, and FAO. It should be specified at the outset that some organizations have responded stating that they do not have communication for development programmes at the headquarters level; for others, only at the field level. Still others mentioned the fact that programmes for communication are implemented by the national authorities in co-operation with United Nations agencies. One organization stated that it does not have any information to contribute to the study, while another responded by stating that they have no communication programme in the sense that it is understood by UNESCO. Views were also exchanged with the communication departments of a university and non-governmental organization in the field.

6. The investigation showed that UNESCO's request has been particularly timely and has raised problem areas for which there is an increasing awareness and greater demand for solutions. This is also in the light of the fresh approach of the Secretary-General to the problems of development and of his appeal to the international community for more attention to be paid to such an important issue

the implications of which are so effectively put into light in the "agenda for development".

7. The Inspector is grateful to all who have spared their time and energy to contribute to the preparation of the study. Their participation has greatly facilitated work on the report and stimulated research, providing a new dimension and commitment.

1. THE IMPORTANCE AND SCOPE OF THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION

8. The importance and scope of "Communication for Development" differs widely from one organization to another. Organizations such as UNICEF, and UNFPA tend to decentralize their activities to the regional and country offices. They accord a great deal of importance to "communication/mobilization programmes". UNICEF alone spends over \$100 million a year on such programmes. UNFPA allocated 17 percent of its resources for communication and education programmes in 1992. This was the second largest allocation after family planning, which also has a communication support component. WHO has allocated about \$4 million for communication and public information at Headquarters level for the biennium 1994-95, representing approximately 0.5 percent of its total regular programme budget. United Nations/DPI allocates 0.6 percent of its overall regular budget for strengthening communication capabilities of developing countries. Other agencies do not have specific allocations for communication for development but they include communication as part of the approved work programme of some sections, whilst some have simply no financial allocation for communication. According to an FAO publication on Communication for Development, the overall budget for communication is about 10 percent of the total development programme budget. For large-scale programmes, however, it may be as low as one percent, and for small programmes somewhat higher than 10 percent.¹

9. Two different approaches and orientations exist concerning communication. The first is field-oriented and relies on communication for human development emphasizing more popular participation through extension and development agents including development-oriented NGOs. The second approach maintains a global view of the problems of development rather than specific country policies and is mainly concerned with development of communication per se, involving the media in general with respect to the formulation of general programmes requiring global actions such as the campaign against AIDS, illiteracy, the promotion of the Programme of Health for all by the year 2000. Distinct actions and useful complementarity characterize these two approaches.

10. UNDP makes some funding available to both groups. Since the 1970s, it has evolved a policy whereby communication components are integrated in projects at the country level through the Development Support Communication Office (later called the Development Communication Training Programme) which also had regional bureaux. These funds were administered mainly by this Office, and not by the specialized agencies. As a matter of fact, most funds for communication were allocated for telecommunication and transportation projects proposed by governments.

11. Humanitarian assistance within the framework of peace-making and peace-keeping processes is a new area requiring communication structures. The Department of Peace-Keeping Operations (DPKO) is assigned an important communication and co-ordination role at Headquarters level by "co-ordinating

instructions sent to the field missions on operational matters as well as co-ordinating relationships between Headquarters, New York and each mission in the field by providing backstopping". The JIU through its report on "Staffing of the United Nations Peace-Keeping and Related Missions" (Civilian Component) (JIU/REP/93/6) has maintained that "...Communication from the field continues to be irregularly channelled to different departments at Headquarters creating further problems in the flow of information, co-ordination and hence, coherence and timely instructions".²

A. Principal ways of conveying public information

12. Public information concerning development programmes is presently conveyed in four principal ways:

- (a) Provision of news and information to the people through the press, radio, television and audio-visual educational programmes.
- (b) Informatics: access to data base and electronically-stored information in libraries, archives and cultural centres.
- (c) Telecommunications: telephone services, facsimile, telex, telegrams, data transmission, electronic mail.
- (d) Postal Services: mail and parcel services, telegrams.

13. Information technology has become an indispensable tool for developing an effective communication structure. New technologies are offering many opportunities, with the possibility of reaching untapped audiences. In many developing countries this could include interactive media. The United Nations system needs to be at the cutting edge of such possibilities. In more traditional areas, the use of radio has to be stressed and the conduct of journalists' training courses in developing countries should be seen as a form of capacity building.

14. Keeping up with modern technology is a priority concern to developing countries which have limited access to the information media. They seek more assistance in this area to ensure that their requirements for information technology are accurately reflected in every project set up to help them build up their information infrastructure. The World Bank states that "Information technology, if used correctly, can help increase workers' productivity, make governments and companies more flexible, and improve decision-making. In the long run, it can make governments more accountable and co-ordinated and could allow them to respond better to social needs".³ The ITU in its Missing Link report concluded more dramatically that "...henceforth no development programme of any country should be regarded as balanced, properly integrated or likely to be effective unless it includes a full and appropriate role for telecommunications and accords corresponding priority for the improvement and expansion of telecommunications".⁴

B. Types of communications

15. The focus of this report, however, is not public information per se, but communication as part of the social process of development. With this limitation in mind, two types of communications are of special interest to the present report:

1. Communication for development purposes included in the design of projects.
2. Communication for humanitarian assistance activities and peace-making and peace-keeping processes.

1. Communication for Development

16. Communication for development is a specialized field which requires ad hoc training. As understood and used by agencies of the United Nations system, communication for development can be clustered in the following areas:

- (a) advocacy at the national and global levels;
- (b) public information at the national and global levels;
- (c) programme communication and social mobilization at the project, community and individual levels; and
- (d) use of tools and systems that enhance the above, namely the print media, interpersonal communication, telecommunication and networking.

17. The goal of communication for development is to integrate, within project designs, motivation and teaching skills to strengthen the processes that enable communities and people therein to acquire new knowledge, ideas and analyze decisions and actions. This objective corresponds closely to the mandates of most of the development agencies and in particular to that of the International Programme for Development Communication (IPDC) of UNESCO. The mandates of these agencies give a central role to communication. Some of the agencies such as UNICEF, FAO, WHO and UNEP have recognized the need for social mobilization of their activities which is beyond the traditional "provision of information", and is the essence of "communication" as distinct from information. Participatory approach to development can release a chain reaction leading to results by which development assistance can be measured.

18. An FAO publication on "Communication a key to human development" explains the role of communication as follows: "A decisive role can be played by communication in promoting human development in today's new climate of social change. As the world moves towards greater democracy, decentralization and the

market economy, conditions are becoming more favourable for people to start steering their own course of change. But it is vital to stimulate their awareness, participation and capabilities. Communication skills and technology are central to this task, but at present are often under-utilized. Policies are needed that encourage effective planning and implementation of communication programmes."⁵

19. The JIU report on "Evaluation of Rural Development Activities of the United Nations System in three African Least Developed Countries" (JIU/REP/89/2, A/45/76, E/1990/12) attempted to determine the extent to which beneficiaries were involved in the identification, planning and implementation of project activities. The report emphasized that communication should always be included in the preparation of projects to ensure that the project is needed and understood by the beneficiaries. A policy of communicating with the beneficiaries at the planning level of a programme, and taking into account their views and needs, is one way of assuring the success and sustainability of the programme. Years of technical co-operation experience has proved that "popular participation" is indispensable for any United Nations project to succeed, and that ample use of communication can catalyze and multiply this popular participation. In fact, the IPDC accords first priority to the financing of projects from the least developed countries and annually prepares a budget for preparatory assistance for these countries' projects.⁶

20. A second, equally important, function of communication is the maintenance of liaison between the United Nations and the government decision/policy-makers throughout the duration of a project. The United Nations deals directly with sovereign states; it needs to enhance its communication with them. One way of achieving an effective channel of communication with appropriate government officials at the decision-making level would be by including formal training for local nationals in communication skills as an integrated component of development projects. This could include on-the-job training provided by project experts as well as formal educational institutions for training general communication experts.

(a) Training

21. A well-trained communication expert will not only help the government to understand the purpose of specific United Nations activities, but will also facilitate the task of United Nations specialized agencies by being the channel of communication with the government. To date, only a few organizations, namely UNESCO, UNICEF and FAO have trained communication specialists at the regional and national level as an integral part of projects. Within UNESCO, the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) provides training or finances training centres for communication experts. UNESCO establishes information, library and archives services for Member States through its "General Information Programme" (PGI). It trains computer specialists for developing countries through its "Inter-governmental Informatics Programme" (IIP). This is the only programme devoted to international co-operation concerned exclusively with informatics within the United Nations system.

22. UNESCO has trained communication specialists at the regional and national levels to assist in all phases of project formulation: definition of needs, planning and execution, co-ordination and evaluation. Links were established between countries and regions through regional media networks and national broadcasting institutions for the purpose of promoting projects in several countries such as the "Advancement of Women".

23. The General Assembly has requested the Secretary-General to direct the Publication Board under DPI, that it "provides, on the basis of its activities, information to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization about new forms of co-operation, at the regional and sub-regional levels, for the training of media professionals and for the improvement of information and communication infrastructures of developing countries..."⁷ (A/AC.198/1992/L-2). This is different from the mandate of ITU, which is responsible for the development of more technical aspects of communication infrastructure such as public telecommunication, broadcasting and emerging value-added information services. The Inspector fully supports the mandate entrusted to the Secretary-General and believes that appropriate training in the field of journalism be designed and provided to United Nations system employees involved in massmedia reporting and communication tasks.

24. Through its Global Communication Support Fund, UNICEF organized a middle level journalism training programme in Asia. Radio and journalism training programmes are also designed for Africa.

25. WHO Headquarters in Geneva collaborated with UNESCO in organizing training workshops for media and health personnel in Africa and Asia on promoting communication for health through the media. Its regional office for Latin America provides national staff courses in journalism and post-graduate studies in health. It also encourages public health schools to do more training in communication.

26. The Inspector believes that providing practical media training to national counterparts is an essential component of improved communication for development, in general, and an important objective in operational development activities in particular. Ways and means should be explored to use existing programmes and infrastructures, without incurring additional cost. Equally relevant would be the identification of appropriate communication training centres in the beneficiary countries, thus encouraging partnership and long-term continuity. In this connection, the role of the ILO's International Training Centre in Turin could be considered as one of the possibilities. The curriculum of the comprehensive training course on "Management of Development: National Capacity Building" organized by the Centre could provide a model for communication.

27. In addition the ILO has invited all organizations of the United Nations system to make greater use of the Centre as a training facility. At its eightieth session in June 1993, the Committee on Technical Co-operation of the International Labour Conference called specifically on the Turin Centre to act as a key training instrument that should: "contribute to the design and implementation of various

training activities within the United Nations system with particular emphasis on the ILO mandate and strengthening the management capacity of recipient governments and social partners for technical co-operation and on fostering effective co-ordination and teamwork within the United Nations system itself". During 1990-1993 "some 950 participants, senior United Nations System officials as well as their national counterparts, have benefited from the various programmes conducted by the Centre in the area of management of technical co-operation and operational activities training".⁸

28. In relation to the above activities, the Inspector would like to propose that the Turin Centre should also extend its services and expertise to the United Nations regional commissions in order to strengthen their communication for development programmes.

(b) Co-ordination of communication at the country level

29. To improve co-ordination of communication in field projects, and particularly among the specialized agencies, there is a need for the United Nations system, in co-operation with governments and other concerned parties, to create a communication co-ordinating body, which would include government representatives, bilateral donors, community leaders and the United Nations agencies under the umbrella of United Nations Resident Co-ordinators. Among others, its tasks would include the formulation of communication policies and follow-up of their implementation.

30. UNESCO's attempt in the early 1970s to set up a Communication Policy Council for each country involving governments, NGOs and the professional community, was not successful. In most cases, it was not possible to establish the Councils and in the very rare cases where they were established they did not become operative. It should be noted, however, that historically speaking, these national councils were primarily aimed at influencing and designing relevant national policies for the planning of communication infrastructures, and not for field operations or implementation of projects. FAO, on the other hand, has successfully helped to establish development support communication national co-ordination mechanisms in Mali, and is now undertaking the same in Malawi, Comoros and Guinea Bissau. The format proposed by the JIU in report "Evaluation of Rural Development Activities of the United Nations system in Three African Least Developed Countries" mentioned earlier, suggested that a "Rural Development Co-ordinating Committee" should be established in two or three countries co-operating together.

31. The Inspector believes that, because of the awareness of the emergent needs for better communication structures both at the inter-agency and country level, the time has come for setting up a body for "Communication for Development and Humanitarian Assistance" at the country level. However, until such a body is established the existing infrastructures such as those of the United Nations Resident Co-ordinator and/or JUNIC at the country level could be used. Temporary modalities for co-operation should be established by ACC.

2. *Communication for humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations deployed in the context of humanitarian assistance*

(a) Humanitarian Assistance

32. Communication in the field of humanitarian assistance is not only desirable but is an integral part of the operations of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA).

33. One type of communication concerns natural disasters when communication channels have to be re-established between donors and beneficiaries. This is usually a short-term operation of about six months to one year, after which long-term national communication and development activities should start with the help of the specialized agencies. The second type deals with man-made disaster and conflict situations. Here, communication is again most essential since local people are the victims. DHA must negotiate to reach agreement with all sides to gain access to the affected population and provide the necessary assistance.

34. A concrete example of the importance that communication assumes in humanitarian assistance is the situation in former Yugoslavia, where the United Nations has to go through extensive negotiations to open humanitarian assistance corridors. Another example is the recent United Nations inter-agency mission (including UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa, the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation (BPPE), and Humanitarian Programmes, as well as WHO, UNICEF, and the Department for Humanitarian Affairs) set up to assess the situation of displaced women in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The mission identified the need for communication, specifically information, education and communication (IEC) to ensure, among other things, women's participation in rebuilding and reconciliation and for mobilizing them for leadership in these areas. Cut off from their homes and families, IEC was also seen as a vehicle to inform displaced populations of daily events and developments and even of how to locate family members. All these activities involve communication and co-ordination.

35. An early warning system, which is mostly used as a rapid response system, has been set up and is put in motion when disasters threaten, and is normally activated in the event of slow onset disasters such as cyclones and floods. This system is maintained and co-ordinated by DHA whereby an inter-agency team consisting of UNICEF, UNHCR, FAO, UNDP, and NGOs is sent out to the field under the auspices of DHA to assess the need for urgent action and to appeal to donors accordingly. Thus, DHA acts as a channel of communication to bring together donors, people and governments.

36. In 1993, in anticipation of disaster and relief operations, UNESCO contributed to a regional workshop in the Caribbean to determine the role the mass media should play in disaster alert and relief operations. In addition, several training programmes were organized in Cambodia including a media handbook on land mine awareness. UNESCO also established the Centre for Journalists in

Ljubljana to assist in ensuring objective news reporting during the current civil strife; assistance has also been provided to independent newspapers and journalists. In addition, UNESCO has been assisting the National and University library of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Sarajevo by providing books and preparing plans for reconstruction, thereby contributing to the intellectual aspects of humanitarian aid.

(b) Peace-keeping operations

37. DPKO is the main department responsible for peace-keeping operations and related missions which include humanitarian assistance and election process. All operations are managed from New York. A survey by the JIU has evidenced, for the civilian component, the lack of a professional structure in the field, which resulted in uneven-handed discharging of the United Nation's peace-keeping responsibilities. (JIU/REP/93/6).⁹

38. The United Nations had a budget of over 3 billion dollars for peace-keeping operations in 1993 alone. This is more than the regular budget of the United Nations.¹⁰ The possibilities for the United Nations to be involved in further peace-keeping operations are on the rise, making communication crucial both in humanitarian and peace-keeping efforts.

39. Peace-keeping operations in their different forms also come under consideration especially when they are employed as a vehicle to ensure humanitarian assistance. Their involvement is particularly relevant in peace-making when it is necessary to restore the structure of destroyed states and set up the indispensable framework for development and humanitarian aid.

40. The United Nations humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping activities in both Somalia and the former Yugoslavia are of particular significance. In the case of Somalia, the purpose of the United Nations presence has not always been clearly explained and was partly misunderstood due to insufficient communication processes. The useful recourse to the distribution of information leaflets from helicopters came at a crucial moment since the population was not informed about the purpose of the United Nations presence. The lacuna in communication of field operations demonstrates a clear gap between the United Nations and the public which deserves better attention in general during specific peace-making missions.

41. One of the main obstacles identified by the Inspector during the preparation of this study is that there has been limited advance planning and no comprehensive communication policy on peace-keeping. Operations have been carried out on an ad hoc basis. The results have been uneven because of actions taken under pressure, lack of financial and staff resources as well as slow recruitment processes.

42. Difficulties are aggravated by non-existent or insufficient co-ordination with serious consequences such as mismanagement, waste of resources. The Inspector was informed, for instance, that in Somalia a very large amount of communication

equipment (satellite earth stations) have been provided without any co-ordination of the several links belonging to different agencies and without plans for the retrieval and future use of the material. In Cambodia, substantial funds were spent on installing radio and TV stations with the purpose of ensuring the success of the electoral process. But at the end of the elections there was no co-ordination on how this valuable equipment could be used and what would be the best destination. The organization of communication cannot ignore these aspects. They raise serious problems and require urgent solutions to respond to the increasing demand of Member States for better accountability, transparency and careful use of financial resources.

43. The content and modality of delivery of the information is the essence of communication responsibilities which concerns the United Nations Joint Information Committee (JUNIC), its Secretariat, and the Department of Public Information (DPI). They can play an effective role in crisis areas around the world to improve the United Nations image. But the role of public information in peace-keeping and humanitarian assistance cannot be fully implemented without the indispensable component of communication in all its different aspects.

II. EXISTING INTER-AGENCY COMMUNICATION MECHANISM

44. The investigations of the Inspector have clearly evidenced the need to harmonize development communication in the United Nations system. In the present study, an attempt is made to assess these felt needs and related issues. Also examined are existing temporary arrangements for inter-agency co-ordination to see if these could be made more effective and whether a more permanent set-up is desirable. Proposals of an immediate and long-term nature are made, keeping in mind the mandates of the specialized agencies, especially that of UNESCO because of its specific competence in the field of communication.

45. Other agencies are also co-operating in this field. One of the many examples is the recent initiative taken by UNESCO and UNFPA to prepare a training package on communication as a discipline. The study was entitled "Approaches to development communication: an orientation kit and resource". Three main objectives were given for the training package: (i) "to identify each agency's concern with communication in general and development communication in particular; (ii) to examine community development projects and activities and look for representative examples; and (iii) to describe the conceptual underpinning of development communication as it is being practised".¹¹ Researchers from two universities were involved in the preparation of the training package. The profiles contained in the kit examine communication as it relates to the various United Nations agencies and how it fits into their general activities.

46. The ILO and the United Nations are making new arrangements and programmes whereby closer co-operation between the United Nations and the ILO Turin Centre will be established in the areas of, "operational activity training"; "development management"; "humanitarian affairs"; "international drug control programmes (UNDCP)"; and "United Nations peace-keeping operations".¹² However, in order to make all these programmes effective, training in "communication for development programmes" should be included in the list.

47. Another example is the co-operation between FAO and UNICEF on rural radio training packages undertaken in several countries, including a rural broadcasting project in Chad. A "Development Support Communication " (DSC) branch has been established within the Information Division of FAO, with the specific mandate to support FAO's major substantive programmes in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. UNESCO has a Communication Division which includes a section for Communication Development. This is the analogous counterpart of FAO's DSC offices. There are also nine UNESCO Regional Communication Advisers, one in each major region or sub-region of the world. UNESCO uses DSC concepts in many of its field projects. It is co-operating with ITU in joint studies in the field of satellite, telecommunication tariffs, utilization and exchange of data; and master plans for broadcasting in developing countries. Almost all field-oriented agencies are co-operating in the areas of environment and protection against AIDS.

48. These efforts can be pulled together to benefit the agencies through their mutual experience and to produce better results from their programmes. Cost saving, reduction or elimination of duplication of efforts, and an improved mechanism of co-ordination are needed. Not all agencies have yet attempted to create development communication offices nor have they identified focal points at their respective headquarters to facilitate inter-agency co-ordination and exchange of information on communication. The next chapter explains and further analyzes the role of UNESCO, the agency requesting this study, as well as other agencies involved in the field of communication for development programmes.

A. The Role of UNESCO: Communication, Information and Informatics

49. UNESCO is recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations as a lead agency in the field of social communications. Unlike many other organizations, UNESCO sees communication as a major programme in its own right and not only as a support to other development processes.¹³ It plays an important role in fields ranging from information exchange to the establishment of communication infrastructures. As set out in its Constitution, UNESCO's primary objective is "building the defense of peace in the minds of men" and promoting the free flow of ideas by word and image. The Organization, therefore, seeks to assist developing countries to build, reinforce or expand their communication systems through modern technologies.

50. UNESCO now has a comprehensive, integrated sectoral programme for Communication, Information and Informatics. Each of these programmes is managed by a division. Parallel with this structure are three intergovernmental bodies that advise and raise funds. Respectively, these are the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), the Intergovernmental Committee for the General Programme of Information (PGI) and the International Informatics Programme (IIP). Public information is handled by a separate unit: the Office for Public Information.

(a) International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC)

51. The International Programme for the Development of Communication was established in 1981 to help developing countries in setting up new communication infrastructures and/or improving existing ones, as well as in providing training or financing training centres for communication experts. IPDC is financed through voluntary contributions. It is the only intergovernmental programme which serves the needs of public and private communication institutions and gives priority to freedom of expression, media pluralism and independence. In 1992, the General Assembly of the United Nations urged all countries, organizations of the United Nations system and others concerned to "...Provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which should support both public and private media".¹⁴ (A/AC.198/1992/L.2)

52. The IPDC meets annually to review project needs and requests. A recent innovation has been project reviews at the regional level in co-operation with non-governmental communication experts. It is responding to communication demands of a broad spectrum of countries often not included on donors' lists, but it is limited in its response by the generosity of its donors.

53. Historically, the IPDC began with the regular convening of an inter-agency committee in order to discuss areas of co-operation and possible IPDC funding for communication projects of other agencies. With limited contributions, however, it became impossible to provide adequate funding for projects strictly outside the scope of communication development. As a result of diminished funding for other agencies, their attendance became less and less frequent and the inter-agency committee eventually lapsed into disuse. Nonetheless, IPDC continues to fund several projects for health campaigns in Asia with WHO, rural postal services with UPU, agricultural communication projects with FAO and co-operates with ITU on technical projects. United Nations specialized agencies are invited to all meetings of the IPDC Council.

54. The response to the JIU questionnaire on "Communication for Development Programmes" sent to agencies together with discussions the Inspector had with agencies officials, indicate the view that the role of IPDC could be strengthened to respond to current needs of countries, in particular in the field of media training at project level. UNDP, for example, was willing to fund and organize seminars under IPDC to promote independent and pluralistic media in Windhoek (Namibia) and Alma Alta (Kazakhstan).¹⁵ It is doing the same for the conference in Santiago, Chile, on MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN. UN/DPI has also given concrete support to IPDC under the auspices of UNESCO, in co-operation with UNDP, in preparing the two seminars mentioned above. In addition the Department co-sponsored also the seminar in Latin America and the Caribbean.

55. However, while UNDP has funded seminars on independent and pluralistic media, it has been less willing to fund communication development projects in the last twelve years. There has been no major UNESCO communication project funded by UNDP since 1982. UNDP should also fund the projects emanating from these seminars organized by both the United Nations and UNESCO, as well as worthy development communication projects proposed under the country programmes.

56. WHO Headquarters and its regional office for the Americas (PAHO) would like to see IPDC collaborate with countries in developing infrastructure and policy framework for social communication to enhance local culture and ensure equitable access to communication opportunities. It is also the view of UNIDO that IPDC could be effective by consulting very closely with each of the relevant agencies on their specific aims. UNESCO and IPDC have collaborated with countries and specialized agencies in developing infrastructure and policy frameworks for social communication and are still doing so, though perhaps not adequately, but this is due mainly to insufficient financial resources.

(b) General Information Programme (GPI)

57. UNESCO also manages the General Information Programme (GPI), established in 1976. It is the focal point of the Organization's activities designed to create and strengthen information, documentation, library and archives services for Member States. Among other things, GPI "specifically aims to increase the capacities of the developing countries to organize, disseminate and utilize information received".¹⁶

(c) Inter-governmental Informatics Programme (IIP)

58. A further initiative by UNESCO to enhance communication is through the "Inter-governmental Informatics Programme" (IIP). Its principal objective is "to develop human resources through the use of informatics to work towards comprehensive and sustainable development". Since its creation, IIP has participated in over 50 projects having training as their central theme.

59. The Inspector recognizes that the fields of the Communication, Information and Informatics (CII) sector are well established and under a single unit within UNESCO. The CII sector is related to all other sectors of the Organization mainly through inter-sectoral task forces and committees as well as through mutual, technical backstopping of operational projects. New technologies are also being studied in collaboration with ITU for application under reduced telecommunication tariffs for data exchange networks and distance education.

Intersectoral and inter-agency co-operation in design and implementation of projects

60. UNESCO promotes inter-sectoral and inter-agency co-operation; for example in population projects. It intends to include UNEP, UNFPA, UNDP and WHO in its future programmes within the broad framework of "Environment and Population Education and Information for Human Development". The programme will be primarily concerned with relations between the environment, population and development and includes those aspects of education aimed at combatting drug abuse and the spread of AIDS.

61. UNESCO attempted, within the United Nations system, to press for a recognition of communication as a sector in its own right. However, a major problem was encountered in assigning communication a place in development planning. The United Nations system in general did not see the problem in this light. Within the UNDP for example, communication was regarded as part of either transport or telecommunications sectors, or as an educational support. In the ACC classification system it is partly under culture.

62. The Inspector, on the basis of efforts made by UNESCO, is also convinced that communication planning cannot be carried out in isolation. It has to be part and parcel of the overall national development plan of a country and an integrated

part of United Nations agencies' programmes for development. One way of achieving this is by including communication as a major programme in the medium-term plans of agencies and as an important sectoral component of their extrabudgetary development projects.

B. Agencies' need for communication and co-ordination

63. All United Nations agencies need to communicate primarily amongst themselves and with those to whom they are committed.

64. There is wide agreement that "communication" is a prerequisite for successful project implementation and that most agencies have important communication programmes. However, each one attaches to it a different level of importance. Some believe that it should be a sector on its own while others say it should remain as a support to other programmes.

65. UNDP has no clear policy on development communication and it does not feature prominently in the project designs. Use of Development Support Communication (DSC) has been on an ad hoc basis. The original project design procedures, which were used up to 1987, included a section on DSC, but this section was dropped when the procedures were changed. The Organization has no communication unit at Headquarters and is of the opinion that co-ordination of communication programmes should be at the country level involving governments.

66. Although UNDP actively supported development communication in the late sixties, the discipline has not received adequate and sustained attention. UNDP's involvement with DSC has traditionally been limited to such initiatives as its 1969 collaboration with UNICEF to establish a DSC service in Bangkok for the Asia and Pacific region. Now based in Manila, it is self-financing from the services it provides to mainly United Nations assisted projects in the region.

67. From 1987-1993 the UNDP Regional Programme Division of the Africa Bureau endorsed the use of communication support in the implementation of its women-in-development (WID) programme. Given the multi-faceted, multi-agency approach to WID, communication support was viewed as a necessary element to link people and their activities in the project, and to enhance the level of participation in these projects.

68. Communication in UNDP was seen as a means to maximize the benefits of development goals through popular participation. A strategy was adopted which involved the use of traditional communication channels and multi-media campaigns including radio, films, posters, TV and brochures. This has led to an informed public support for the goals of the project and endorsement by African institutions, governments, and a number of field offices, of communication support mechanisms for use in development projects.

69. UNICEF, like UNDP, also believes that communication should be included in programmes at the field level with a recognition of the role of its professionalism. It is one of the Organizations which has a decentralized system of management and all its country offices have had information/communication units for the last 5 years. Communication officer posts are at P-3 and P-4 levels. In addition, UNICEF established a Global Communication Support Fund in 1990 to encourage the development of innovative communication projects in developing countries in support of UNICEF programme activities. Since its inception, the Global Communication Support Fund has helped to finance a variety of initiatives in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

70. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is the only regional commission visited by the Inspector in relation with this study. Lack of resources prevented covering all five regional commissions of the United Nations as desired. But the choice was also influenced by the special attention given to Africa in the present difficult political, economic and social juncture. In this context the Inspector was pleased to verify the priority that the Commission has given recently to "communication" in general. It was therefore appropriate and timely for the JIU to single out ECA for its investigation in the field. Needless to say, the issues discussed, such as the need for more co-operation and co-ordination in the field of communication and for more emphasis on training for communication specialists at the country and regional level, are also directly relevant to the other regional commissions and lessons learned have a general relevance. (See also the forthcoming report of JIU entitled "Review and Assessment of Efforts to Restructure the Regional Dimension of United Nations Economic and Social Activities".)

71. The findings of the Inspector are that although "revitalizing ECA's communication strategy ranks very high among the priorities for institutional reforms and renewal", communication for development as such has not been prominent within ECA. There is, however, an increasing awareness of the importance of communication for improving the impact of development programmes.

72. The issues of communication are formally dealt with by the Department of Information. But this, it was explained, is due mostly to lack of resources. It is recognized that the target should be to establish a separate office in recognition of the substantial differences between the two fields. In practice, it has been noted that there has not been a systematic input of development support communication (DSC) into the work programmes of the various substantive divisions of the Commission nor has enough attention been given to communication in designing and/or implementing projects. However, this is a situation of which ECA is conscious and for which remedial action is foreseen.

73. Recently, the Commission, under the responsibility of the Policy and Programme Co-ordination Office (PPCO), has prepared a communications strategy report entitled "An improved Communications Strategy for Africa". The report consists of, inter alia, a "three-pronged approach that focuses on enhancing the

quality of ECA's products - mostly published materials; strengthening its processes, in particular contacts with Member States; and improving publicity for ECA's products and activities".¹⁷ All the above-mentioned efforts would lead to improved communication in general and to a better image of ECA in particular. It would also, indirectly, have a positive effect on the development programmes of the Commission.

74. The Inspector commends the efforts and steps being taken by ECA to improve its communication strategy and agrees that this deserves encouragement and support especially if more importance will be given to communication as an indispensable component of development programmes. In a broader perspective, the Inspector favours the opinion that the regional commissions should be more involved in the inter-agency communication mechanism. Their role is not always sufficiently acknowledged because they are part and parcel of the United Nations Secretariat. The regional commissions' need is strongly felt by ECA and it should be given a niche as a leading agency at the regional level. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in their series of resolutions, (in particular 32/197 of 20 December 1977 and 33/202 of 29 January 1979), have stressed the importance of the United Nations regional commissions in the area of regional co-operation, co-ordination and development for their respective regions. They emphasized, among others, that United Nations economic and social activities be decentralized, that regional commissions become operational and execute projects, and that the commissions be given resources for these tasks.¹⁸ Several years later, the regional commissions are faced now more than ever before with lack of resources, hence hampered from carrying out their mandates as requested by the different United Nations governing bodies.

75. ECA has several centres and departments which depend on extrabudgetary resources to carry out their activities. One of these sectors is the "African Training and Research Centre for Women" (ATRCW), which has a very well designed communication network throughout Africa, but has been hampered from implementing its projects because of lack of resources. At the time of the JIU visit, the Centre received a donation from a Government for the project "improving the communication network at the African Training and Research Centre for Women". The objective of the project is to improve "Channels of communication between ATRCW and member governments' agencies, development organizations, media institutions, etc."¹⁹

76. The Inspector is convinced that similar projects need to be supported by donor agencies, bi-lateral donors and multi-lateral organizations through increased funding and initiatives aimed at strengthening communication for development policies within the United Nations regional commissions.

77. FAO is firmly convinced that people-oriented development can only realize its full potential if knowledge is shared, if technologies are transferred and if the rural populations are motivated, organized and involved. Communication caters to the human dimensions of development: it establishes a dialogue with rural

people, involves them in the planning of their own development, and conveys the knowledge and skills required to improve the quality of their life.

78. Communication methodologies, tools and technologies can help overcome the barriers of illiteracy, language, intercultural differences and physical isolation. Modern systems of communication are merged with traditions, cultural values and aspirations of rural families in order to create a critical awareness of problems and build a capacity to respond to them.

79. FAO and the World Bank cite PRODERITH, an integrated rural development programme in Mexico, as an example of a successful communication programme which has applied communication methods and tools to involve people in the planning and implementation of local development programmes as well in the sharing of knowledge and skills with farmers and technicians and providing information to decision-makers.

80. An FAO brochure entitled "Guidelines on communication for rural development", calls for conscious and active participation of the beneficiaries at every stage of the development process. It states that this cannot take place without changes in attitudes and behaviour among the people concerned. It defines development communication as "the planned and systematic use of communication through interpersonal channels, audiovisual and mass media", and considers the radio the most effective way in many development projects, especially when the rate of illiteracy is high.

81. The major aims of development communication as underlined in the Guidelines are:

- reaching a consensus on the development problems being faced and the options for their solution;

- solving problems and misunderstandings that may arise during project implementation;

- applying communication technology to training and extension programmes, particularly at the grassroots level, in order to improve their quality and impact.²⁰

82. In summary, FAO through its DSC Branch, has promoted and operated communication activities in two broad categories: first, those that are part of a specific communication project and secondly, communication projects per se such as strengthening rural radio broadcasting, establishing communication units, suggesting communication strategies.²¹

83. Another relevant example of the value of involving beneficiaries is "the Programme of Assistance to Displaced Persons, Refugees and Repatriations in Central America known as PRODERE"²² This is a joint programme of co-operation between Italy, UNDP and UNHCR whereby several Latin American countries were involved from the design to the implementation stages of the programme. Those who were once refugees have now been repatriated and begun a normal life.

84. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has three units dealing with Communication/Information. They are:

- (a) The Public Information Division which is the spokes-person for the High Commissioner.
- (b) Goodwill Ambassadors for special events; and
- (c) Mass Information.

85. The Public Information Division and goodwill Ambassadors for special events are traditional avenues for informing and creating public awareness about refugees. Mass Information however, is a new method with the purpose of providing objective information to refugees and asylum seekers. It is a "method to regularize unwanted population movements, to promote voluntary repatriations and to support peace-keeping operations".²³

86. The Mass Information programme was started in 1989-90 with a comprehensive plan for Indo-Chinese refugees. Information about the legal aspects and life-style in the different countries of asylum, including economic and social problems, were broadcast via radio and television to the people of Vietnam who wanted to leave their country. This communication and information process succeeded in reducing by 70 to 80 percent the flow of people leaving their country for various reasons and increased the number of legal refugees. The Indo-China experience is now being used by the Mass Information programme in the case of refugees from the former Yugoslavia and Albania, as well as asylum seekers. UNHCR is carrying out a joint programme in Russia in co-operation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with the objective of stabilizing "irregular population movements through information and mass awareness".²⁴

87. Although not fully a development-oriented Organization, UNHCR depends greatly on communication and information for the success of its protection and assistance programmes. It insists that the people who are involved in communications must be experts in the field. The office responsible for the implementation of the programmes is part of the External Relations Department.

88. The WHO governing bodies have always stressed the need and importance of communication and education for health and development. The major aims are:

- (a) to strengthen advocacy for health and heighten public awareness about health and related development issues;
- (b) to promote intersectoral support and community mobilization for health action;
- (c) enhance people's knowledge and interest in dealing with specific health problems and issues; and
- (d) facilitate the adoption of healthy behaviours and life-styles.²⁵

89. Promotion of advocacy for health, including advocacy with decision-makers, support to training in communication for health, production and distribution of videos, news excerpts, teleconferences, radio programmes, photos and exhibits, brochures on priority health issues are among key communication actions organized by WHO. These actions are carried out by the WHO health education and public information entity at Headquarters. A similar set-up exists in the six WHO regional offices. The WHO Regional Office for Africa is promoting public information and communication for health at country-level through the work of its health information assistants established in the WHO country offices of the region.

90. Through its regional office in Latin America (PAHO), WHO maintains different levels of communication with universities, Ministries of Health, science foundations and NGOs. Each type of communication applies a different strategy and technology. PAHO is the first to organize teleconferences on AIDS for the region. They have developed a computer network through INTERNET to exchange information and believe that with a good communication system an effective technical assistance programme can be realized.

91. PAHO has offices in all South American countries and can reach the population through radio and television programmes, brochures and workshops. A useful communication tool is the publication "Health Communication" published annually. It contains country profiles used to analyze and evaluate daily information for decision-makers. There is a general concern in WHO that social communication factors need to be accepted by governments and that there is a need to institutionalize awareness at the decision-making level.

92. The World Bank keeps the issue of communication on its agenda. Some sectors such as information, environment and family planning work with NGOs and use their communication devices.

93. The Bank recently launched a review of its lending programmes and set up a task force headed by one of its Vice- Presidents. Among the concerns expressed in the report of the task force is the decline of lending operations reflected by the criteria of the Bank. The report attempted to find the reasons why lending is on the decrease and among other measures suggested that "Communication should be part of the planning process at the inception level".²⁶

94. Based on the above findings, the Bank anticipates having a Communication and Information Strategy through the stages of conceptualization and implementation of projects. Popular participation will be designed to include:

- participatory involvement at the conceptualization level; and
- participatory learning process.

95. The Bank has, for the first time, allocated a fund of \$300,000 for the participatory approaches. The structure of the fund is being worked out and the first task will be to obtain information from outside official circles as well. In

implementing this programme, the Bank needs partnership with other United Nations agencies. The Inspector was informed that the Bank will need an intermediary to widen and speed up communications. Co-operation could be established in this area with organizations such as UNDP which already has infrastructures set up at the country level.

96. The above across-the-board analysis demonstrates and confirms that communication has an essential role to play in the success of development programmes carried out by the international community, through the United Nations system.

C. Informal Network: Round Table Conferences on Communication for Development.

97. The following paragraphs deal with some, albeit informal, concrete actions taken by the agencies in co-operation with external institutions including universities and NGOs.

98. Over 30 years have passed since Organizations of the United Nations system launched the technical co-operation approach to assist developing countries in their efforts to improve their socio-economic status. The Inspector was made aware that these efforts and goodwill of organizations would have been more effective and beneficial to the recipients had sound communication components been included in the programmes. This simply means that in the preparation of projects and/or programmes a bigger share should have been reserved for those who were going to use them and benefit from the implementation. Well-designed communication programmes improve understanding among the main actors of development, encourage co-ordination between agencies involved in development work and increase efficient and effective use of scarce resources. It is regrettable that General Assembly Resolution 47/199 "Triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system", which deals with practically all development issues does not make any reference to communication for development programmes.

99. Each agency contacted by the Inspector pointed out the importance of communication as a prerequisite for any development programme to succeed. However, the definition and understanding of the discipline vary and in some cases is non-existent. The need to co-ordinate communication for development efforts has not yet been accepted system-wide. Each agency has its own distinct approach and is rarely aware of what other agencies are trying to achieve in the same field. This again is partly due to their policies which are reflected in their operational programmes and projects. This results in financial waste, encourages duplication of efforts and decreases efficiency. A higher impact would have resulted if there had been more systematic and permanent co-operation and co-ordination.

100. Many agencies have participated, under the sponsorship of different organizations, in a series of "Round Tables on Communication for Development" convened on an almost regular basis. This arrangement is the only inter-agency professional consultation mechanism for development communication. It involves communication specialists from the United Nations system, multilateral and bilateral agencies. It aims to improve communication programmes and create a common framework of approaches to communication for development. The first round table was held at UNICEF headquarters in New York in 1989, the second in Ottawa in 1990, the third at FAO Headquarters in Rome in 1991 and the fourth in Lima, Peru, in 1993. The fifth is planned to be held in Sri Lanka in 1994 organized by the Worldview International Foundation. The participants included multilateral organizations, NGOs, universities and United Nations system organizations.

101. The initiatives taken by those involved in establishing a forum for discussing the inadequacy of communication for development within the United Nations system are to be commended and encouraged. The Inspector, however, would like to make the following analysis of the round table conferences held so far, with the aim of making the process more effective and responsive to current needs.

D. Analysis of the Round Tables

102. The original objectives of the round tables were primarily to share information and propose areas for co-operation among the specialized agencies and other members, mainly on an informal basis. Communication specialists who have participated in the round tables have spent much effort on programmes and projects and not enough on convincing decision-makers about appropriate policy. "The round tables began as a club for people from industrialized countries but are now open to others"²⁷ says one of the reports of the conference. The question remains, how open?

103. The mix of participants in the round tables should include more people from developing countries. Representatives of the private sector should also be included in future conferences. Round tables should aim beyond the simple exchange of information and focus also on strategy and joint operations.

104. The round table process has been kept informal and inaccessible to many agencies. The largest development financing agency of the United Nations system, namely UNDP, has not participated in these Round Tables for Development Communication. It emerged from the investigation that most UNDP staff members know little, if anything, about these round tables. The Inspector is, therefore, convinced that efforts should be deployed in this direction so that agencies could benefit from a greater sharing of information and experience. An open forum whereby all agencies involved in development and humanitarian activities can participate may be preferable. However, to keep its effectiveness and flexibility the participants of each organization should be limited in number.

105. All agencies, with the exception of UNICEF, FAO and UN/DPI, have responded to the JIU questionnaire stating that they favour the formalization of the Round Table Conference. One organization suggested that the Conference must have focus to be effective. Another argued, however, that this forum should stay informal to ensure that "The Round Table is accessible only to eminent persons who can contribute and develop ideas and approaches concerning information and communication strategies".

106. FAO is greatly interested in the yearly round tables continuing as an informal forum which allows the involvement of academic institutions and NGOs, each contributing with its own experiences, but without a too rigid and formal set-up. The informal forum is, in FAO's view, more productive for wide participation, freedom of expression and for discussion of practical experiences. It favours, furthermore, the possibility of joint ventures (a package programme is organized between FAO, UNICEF and UNESCO in the field of radio broadcasting).

107. The round table has been in existence only five years. During this time, it has contributed to the recognition of the importance of communication and discussed problems dealing with communication for development in an informal and flexible manner. The conclusion drawn by the Inspector regarding round tables is that they have thus far been an exclusive forum for those who have the knowledge and the means to participate. It would be unfortunate if this great potential for co-operation among agencies in communication for development is not expanded to include all organizations of the United Nations System, hence fully exploited and its learning more widely shared. Nonetheless, the Inspector does appreciate the heuristic and exploratory nature of this informal mechanism.

E. Analysis of problems of co-operation and co-ordination at the inter-agency level

108. At present, inadequate attention is given to the role of communication in development and humanitarian assistance. Few agencies, other than UNESCO, UNICEF and FAO, consider communication as a programme in its own right. In effect, several agencies have not allocated a fund to the communication programme. This has led in several cases to the launching of development and humanitarian projects without adequate information and involvement of the beneficiaries. Consequently, the impact of technical co-operation during the last 40 years has, in several instances, left much to be desired.

109. The Inspector is aware of the different mandates entrusted to each agency by their governing bodies. He is, however, convinced, as repeatedly requested by the General Assembly, that exchanging views on activities and being aware of what other agencies are doing in the same field would go a long way towards making the United Nations communication and information system more relevant and effective. It would also reduce unnecessary duplication of efforts and waste of meagre resources. As one United Nations funding agency stated, "all agencies seem concerned with promoting their own concerns rather than with collaboration for overall development goals". The Secretary-General, in his statement before the

Fifth Committee at the 48th Session of the General Assembly, stated that "Restructuring alone will not produce all the changes that are needed. Concrete steps must be taken to improve co-ordination and efficiency". The time has come, therefore, to change the traditional resistance to co-ordination. Sharing information should be viewed in the light of the changing environment of development. The needs of recipient countries and the financial contributions of the donors should be more fully taken into account.

110. Communication for any programme within the United Nations system should be developed at three levels:

- (a) communication within the organization's major departments;
- (b) communication at the inter-agency level; and
- (c) communication with the beneficiaries and decision-makers at the country level.

111. The agencies should make the effort to set up a mechanism whereby departments will inform each other about the work done on communication in their respective units. There should be an office which assumes the responsibility of co-ordinating the activities in communication and the same office should be the link at the inter-agency level and between headquarters and field offices.

112. In principle, agencies agree that communication is the prerequisite for the successful operation of any programme, be it development or humanitarian assistance. But the present set-up in some agencies of having communication within the Information Division diminishes the importance of the discipline. The task of an information division is to disseminate what is being done by the organizations and the beneficiaries in the most participatory manner. The task of a communication division is to assist field project managers in making their work understood, firstly within their own organization, secondly among the sister agencies and, most important of all, by the beneficiaries. The findings of the Inspector confirm that in the absence of a comprehensive communication programme none of the above functions can be done systematically.

113. UNESCO suggested the rationale for a project on development communication in 1989. The background document for the UNESCO initiative states that "there is a general acceptance that effective, interactive communication is a prerequisite for development" and that "development communication is the sharing of knowledge aimed at reaching a consensus for action that takes into account the interests, needs and capacities of all concerned. It is thus a social process".

114. UNICEF sees communication for development programmes as a key aspect of programme delivery and defines it accordingly. Programme communication assists implementation of all UNICEF programmes, whether they concern health, water and sanitation, primary education or other subjects. A wide range of

information materials aim at both traditional and high-technology media and are supported by highly qualified expertise at both national and global levels.

115. It seems that there is broad consensus on general principles, despite the fact that different approaches and policies have been followed. It is this diversity which has convinced JIU to try to work out a more satisfactory method of inter-agency co-ordination. **The moment has come to design and implement concrete communication programmes in the field of development. For reasons of efficiency and cost-saving, ways and means must be found to achieve maximum output from international efforts deployed in favour of developing countries.**

116. Development projects have sometimes been disappointing if only because the local beneficiaries were not in a position to exploit them fully. The failure in several instances has also been attributed to the fact that the population to which the project was directed was not prepared to receive the innovations. At any rate, development programmes did not integrate into the local scene. An excess of technological ingredients coupled with a "top to down" mentality has not improved communication. **Sharing of knowledge requires a two-way communication, the appropriate use of which can help to overcome barriers of misunderstanding and avoid failure of projects.**

117. In the assessment of possible shortcomings and the search for remedies, the evolution of communication technologies cannot be underestimated. The challenge now is to make the best use of this evolution.

118. **Failure in programmes are also the consequence of miscalculations due to insufficient attention focused on the communication dimension in the preparation phase of the programmes themselves.**

119. From the reactions of some participating agencies on the subject of harmonious integration at the local level and coordination at the inter-agency level, viable recommendations can be drawn.

120. In a recent intervention before the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) a member of the JIU described the frustration caused by lack of co-ordination within the United Nations system: (Statement made at the CPC meeting on May 13 1993).

121. The Inspector agrees with the view of agencies like UNESCO, WHO and FAO that planning for communication development in the Third World must be global, must have technological and social dimensions, and must be combined with an integrated and intersectoral approach. This leads to the recognition that communication should always be assigned a proper place in development planning. **In this context, the proposal to modify the ACC programme classification extended to UNDP use deserves support as it takes into account the far-reaching evolution in the field of communication as a key factor in the social and economic process of development.**

122. Though agencies have different approaches to the problem, an encouraging assessment of converging views emerges from UNESCO: "...approaches to development communication cannot be confined to a single sector or problem area. Thus, even when agency approaches necessarily focus upon, or take as their starting point, a particular perception (such as UNFPA towards population), it should be recognized that in the analysis of basic problems, such as the bases of individual behaviour, and in the application of communication to the resolution of such problems, a holistic view is necessary. Where communication media are involved in development, the capacity of local infrastructures and the imagination and resourcefulness of communication professionals are important factors to be accommodated in planning and training approaches."

123. Among the objectives discussed with the agencies, two can be roughly summarized as follows:

- identify ways and means by which to consolidate the existing informal network;
- develop possible common strategies for future activities in communication for development.

124. The round table meetings have shown a considerable amount of goodwill for practical co-operation. They have evidenced duplications and wasted effort caused by independent initiatives.

125. The commitment and the productivity of the experts in the round tables have proved that times are perhaps ripe for a better organized system of co-ordination in order to cross agency boundaries which have been recognized as barriers.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE ACTIONS ON THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

A. Conclusions on the Round Table Conference

126. Round table participants agree that better strategies for communication should be developed in co-operation with the decision-makers. The need for a joint effort was underlined. Since the United Nations agencies involved in development communication follow different ways, there is a further need to harmonize development communication approaches throughout the United Nations system.

127. There is unanimous agreement among participants that training in development communication is crucial. Development communication needs in Africa are essential and urgent. Shortage of trained people in development communication is one of the constraints facing the developing countries. There is also a need for development communication experts in industrialized countries.

128. The need for training packages for communication experts was also reaffirmed. The major thrust of the training package was to identify each agency's concern with communication in general and development communication in particular. Differences in concepts and language used by various United Nations agencies in respect of development communication made co-operation difficult. Participants agreed on the need for better understanding between policy-makers and practitioners.

129. UNESCO is finalizing a global inventory of institutions that provide training in communication and information media. The information on development communication, however, is not distinctly described because development communication is often an amalgam of a number of different courses and seminars, or a part of ad hoc courses.

130. The participants from one specialized agency pointed out that the UNDP guidelines lacked specific reference to communication and that the Project Programme Manual (PPM) is deficient. The problem of communication should be approached at projects, agency, and inter-agency levels.

131. A general conclusion is that short, on-the-job or in-service training for field staff of development agencies should be provided. Training should also be organized by United Nations specialized agencies for their counterparts at the country level. Several separate initiatives are being taken by different agencies. The Round Table was an ideal forum for discussing them, and for trying to introduce some co-ordination.

B. Future Actions to be considered by agencies during the 5th Round Table Conference on Communication for Development:

132. The 5th Round Table conference is scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka in 1994. It will be organized by the Worldview International Foundation, a communication NGO active in Asia. The Inspector proposes that at that conference, United Nations specialized agencies should make decisions on the following:

- (a) Whether or not to formally constitute the inter-agency round table; and if so, under which organization.
- (b) If the round table is to be so constituted, whether or not the present composition of membership should continue: United Nations specialized agencies (selected, or all); Communication specialists; Private sector; NGOs.
- (c) Focus on regions or sub-regions whose communication requirements have not yet been adequately met. The needs have already been identified and regularly updated by a number of agencies.
- (d) The place and the agenda for future meetings; identify and agree upon institutions and participants from the regions.
- (e) Ways and means of strengthening policies on Communication Programmes for Development establishing standard guidelines, spotting shortcomings and redressing deficiencies.

Annex

The following conclusions can be drawn from the replies to the questionnaire sent to 15 United Nations specialized agencies, out of which 10 responded.

- 1. Eight organizations have communication programmes performing functions such as industrial and technology information; public information; population education and communication; dissemination of information on development; social and economic issues; education for health programmes; social communication on health; and popular participation.**
- 2. The priority given to communication compared to other programmes is low.**
- 3. Six organizations have allocated general funds for communication; four have not.**
- 4. Seven organizations participated in the Round table Conference (RTC) on Communication for Development.**
- 5. Seven organizations indicated that RTC should be formal; three organizations that it should remain informal.**
- 6. Three organizations indicated that collaboration among organizations of the United Nations system concerned with field activities is adequate, and six that they are inadequate.**
- 7. Eight organizations see possibilities for better use of the existing structure for disseminating information in development programmes.**
- 8. Five organizations indicated that UNESCO can help by extending its mandate to include co-ordination of Communication for Development. Three organizations feel it should not extend its present mandate.**
- 9. Four organizations have participated in IPDC's various programmes.**
- 10. Five organizations see a more effective role for IPDC under various conditions, four feel otherwise.**

11. Other views expressed include:

UNFPA: The organization sees the role of information, education and communication (IEC) as one of the key elements of success of population programmes. To maintain support for population goals, UNFPA support governments to have IEC strategies formulated in accordance with the needs of target groups of each country. UNFPA supports IEC plans and programmes, not only in family planning, but also in the advancement of the role and status of women, population resources, environment and development, and the implementation of a country's population policies to deal with population growth, morbidity/mortality, population distribution and migration in accordance with the national development plans and priority designated by the government of each country.

UNDP: In general, development communication could benefit from a more open approach. United Nations and donor agencies, as well as governments, are often reluctant to publicize development failures in their communication programmes. But negative experiences often have important lessons for development. True learning will be enhanced by greater transparency.

UNIDO: The timing of this study is very good. Many organizations are aware of the potential of developments in communications and may be pursuing, at best, parallel or at worst, different but still duplicative directions. Joint action, even when approaching carriers or network providers, can realize great savings in addition to presenting the United Nation's clients with one face for communication.

UNICEF: From some of UNICEF's experiences with mobilizing for broad development objectives, a model for sustainable social action has emerged which responds to some of the critical needs for change perceived by many on both sides of the "donor-beneficiary" divide and in which inter-personal and facilitating communication techniques (as used for example in peer group assessment, analysis and decision-making) play a crucial role. Indeed the facilitating skills required to help groups at various levels seems to UNICEF the most important need and training challenge facing communication in the current environment.

Notes

Part I

1. Communication - a key to human development - FAO, Development Support Communication Branch, 1994, P.24.
2. "Staffing of the United Nations Peace-Keeping and Related Missions (Civilian Component)" (JIU/REP/93/6, P.5, para.24).
3. "World Bank News", Volume XII, No.34, September 1993, P.2.
4. "The Missing Link" a report of the Independent Commission for World-Wide Telecommunication Development set-up by the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in 1982.
5. Communication - a key to human development - FAO, Development Support Communication Branch, 1994, P.3
6. "Working Methods and Procedures: Priority Selection Criteria and Submission Procedures", Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication. UNESCO, March 1992, p.3, para.8.
7. "Information in service of humanity", General Assembly document (A/AC.198/1992/L.2), April 1992.
8. "International Training Centre of the ILO", CC.55.3, Fifty-fifth session - Turin, 18 March 1994, p.3.
9. "Staffing of the United Nations Peace-keeping and Related Missions (Civilian Component)".
10. Ibid.

Part II

11. Report of the "Round table on development communication" Rome, 3-6 September 1991, P.7.
12. "International Training Centre of the ILO", CC55/3, Fifty-fifth Session. Turin, 18 March 1994.
13. "Profiles: United Nations Agencies", UNESCO, internal document, p.1.
14. Ibid.
15. "UNESCO activities in the matter of Free Flow of Information and Freedom of Expression" UNESCO. Communication Division Sector of Communication, Information and Informatics, 5 April 1993. Annex I and II.
16. "Review of the General Information Programme, 1977-1987 - A Compilation of Information on its Characteristics, Activities and Accomplishments". UNESCO/PGI/UNISIST, Paris 1988.
17. "An Improved Communication Strategy for ECA", United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 22 December 1993.

18. "Report of the Economic Commission for Africa: Regional Programming, Operations, Restructuring and Decentralization Issues" (JIU/REP/82/1), para.5.
19. "Improving the communications network at the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) - Bi-lateral Project with the Government of Italy"; Project Progress Report for the period 1 January to 31 December 1993.
20. "Guidelines on Communication for rural development", FAO Development Support Communication Branch - Information Division.
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22. "Central America from Conflicts to Human Development". A UNDP document.
23. "The Theory and Practice of Mass Information", text by Alexander Casella, Coordinator for Mass Information. UNHCR, August 1993.
24. Ibid.
25. Quoted from the WHO headquarters comments on the JIU draft report on "Communication for Development Programmes in the United Nations System".
26. "Participatory Development and the World Bank- Potential Directions for Change". 183 World Bank Discussion papers, edited by Bhuvan Bhatnagar and Aubrey C. Williams. 1992.
27. "Annex III Synthesis of the IV Report on the Round-table on Development Communication". Peru, Lima 1993.



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COORDINATION QUESTIONS

Communication for development programmes
in the United Nations system

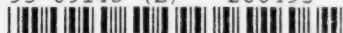
Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council the comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system" (A/50/126-E/1995/20, annex).

* A/50/50.

** E/1995/100.



ANNEX

Comments of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Communication for development programmes in the United Nations system"

I. GENERAL COMMENTS

1. The purpose of the report prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit on the initiative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is to study the role of the discipline of communication in the successful implementation of development programmes and in the improvement of the interaction between actors in development, namely, the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, Governments, non-governmental organizations and beneficiaries. As stressed by the Inspector, the report (a) attempted to define the notion of communication for development and its dimension as an instrument for rallying communities to participate in development projects from assessed needs to implementation, monitoring and evaluation; (b) looked into the communication programmes of UNESCO, which is a focal point for this area within the United Nations system, and examined the status of similar programmes of other agencies; (c) reviewed the existing informal arrangements for coordinating communication programmes for development in the system and examined the opportunities for setting up a more appropriate mechanism for enhancing cooperation among agencies; (d) considered ways to strengthen communication in humanitarian assistance activities and peace-keeping operations; and (e) explored the possibility of cost-saving aspects by using existing forums and facilities in the area under consideration.

2. Based upon information received by the Inspector during his contacts with the staff of headquarters and field offices, and from the analysis of replies to questionnaires provided by 15 organizations and agencies, the author of the study comes to the conclusion that the situation regarding communication activities in the United Nations system is not satisfactory, nor is the level of inter-agency coordination keeping up with the evolution of the discipline. He concludes that most of the agencies attach insufficient importance to communication in operational activities. Left to the initiative of the Chief Technical Adviser of the project, communication is rarely integrated into the entire cycle of development assistance. In the view of the Inspector, the mass media have not been made sufficiently aware of the extensive activities of the system in the field of development, the implementation of projects and their impact on the quality of life of recipients. The Inspector makes a number of recommendations aimed at raising awareness and concern among the United Nations agencies and organizations, multilateral agencies, academic circles and non-governmental organizations as to the need for effective communication structures for attaining the desired objectives of development and humanitarian assistance programmes.

3. The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) found the topic of the study of great interest to the whole family of organizations, agencies, funds and bodies of the United Nations system. It appreciated the attempts of the Inspector to draw attention to the role of development communication as a vital

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component in the development planning process that has to be integrated into any development strategy, especially by the field agencies of the system.

4. In general, members of ACC have found the report well-conceived, comprehensive and balanced. They support in principle its conclusions and recommendations, which are generally fair and constructive, and consider appropriate the proposed measures for improving the situation in the area of communication for development programmes. With regard to the emphasis of the report on the importance of institutional and structural measures for the purpose of improving the efficiency of communication systems, to meet the ever-increasing challenges in the field of development, in general, and in humanitarian assistance and in connection with peace-keeping operations, in particular, some members of the Committee consider it worthy of note that the integration of communication into global development efforts implies the idea that substantive information should be included in major projects and programmes. Accurate and objective information addressing the development problems of the contemporary world is of great significance for Governments not only to acquire new knowledge and analyse all options for future decisions and actions, but also to provide social mobilization of their activities.

5. ACC supports the Inspector when he singles out UNESCO as the lead agency with a mandate in the sector under consideration, and proposes the strengthening of its International Programme for the Development of Communication. It also appreciates the efforts of the author to touch upon an untapped area, namely, the area of education and communication support for humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping operations.

6. In the view of ACC, the report has made an interesting contribution to the debate in the United Nations system on this matter and on related issues. However, the value of the analysis and recommendations of the study is diminished by some of its assumptions and judgements, which are not substantiated and cannot be fully supported.

7. Thus, several members of ACC point to the lack of a clear and common definition of the concept of communication for development in the report, which is one of the reasons behind a poor understanding of inter-agency cooperation in this field. They believe that a common understanding of the concept and related goals, processes and technologies should be shared among all concerned United Nations agencies, organizations and programmes, with the hope that that common understanding would facilitate inter-agency cooperation and maximize the impact of their development programmes at all levels.

8. One member of ACC perceives a sort of contradiction between the terms of reference of the report and its attendant recommendations. In its view, the study appears to ignore the role of the technical media that could be used for inter-agency and public communication. Having a great potential in inter-agency communication, new information technologies such as e-mail, bulletin boards, gopher or world-wide web and other internet tools are very efficient in reaching such external target groups as academic and student circles world wide. It might, therefore, have been useful if the report had incorporated a separate section on the impact of new technologies on communication, with appropriate recommendations on how to handle it in United Nations communications.

9. Another organization believes that the question of dissemination of information about the United Nations system's activities needs greater emphasis in the report. It stresses that the United Nations, in the eyes of the media and of the public, is more known for its peace-keeping and "trouble-shooting" activities than for its very important peace-building function, carried out through multifarious development activities, and that this distorted view needs to be corrected.

10. There is no agreement among the members of ACC concerning the proposal of the Inspector on the strengthening of coordination of communication at the country level. In particular, they do not see the justification for the United Nations to get into the field of creating a body for communication for development and humanitarian assistance at the country level, while there exist infrastructures such as those of the resident coordinator and the Joint United Nations Information Committee for that purpose, as correctly mentioned in the report by the author himself.

11. A number of members of the Committee expressed their concern that their agencies' views on the subject of the study, as well as their experience in the area of communication for development programmes, either did not find proper reflection, or were not included in the report, in spite of the fact that the Inspector had been in contact with those agencies or appropriate information had been provided to the Joint Inspection Unit at the preliminary stage of the preparation of the study.

II. COMMENTS ON RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. Policy decisions and provision of resources for communication

In recognition of the fact that communication is a prerequisite for any programme of the United Nations system to succeed:

(a) The policy of communication should be integrated within each department of an agency dealing with development and humanitarian assistance;

(b) The budgets of all the projects and programmes should contain a specific provision for communication activities.

12. As has been mentioned in the general comments made above, members of ACC are in full agreement with the Inspector that the policy of communication should be integrated within the activities of agencies dealing with development and humanitarian assistance, and that specific provision for communication activities should be included in the budgets of all development projects and programmes. Most development agencies state that their approach in this area is in line with the above recommendation. One organization, however, feels with regard to this recommendation that it would have been helpful if statistical data or case-studies had complemented the assertion that "communication is a prerequisite for any programme of the United Nations system to succeed".

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Recommendation 2. Location of communication units

The major role of communication in the United Nations system is to help programme managers to make their work understood primarily within their own organization, secondly among the sister agencies and most important of all by the beneficiaries. The task of information divisions is to disseminate information about the activities of the United Nations organizations. There is thus a clear distinction between the two disciplines. The present situation whereby communication units are located within the Information Division, with the exception of UNICEF, where the Programme Communication and Social Mobilization Unit is located within the Programme Division rather than the Information Division, diminishes the importance of communication, which is not exclusively public information. Communication units, therefore, should enjoy a certain autonomy and have direct functional relations with the various organizational offices dealing with field activities.

13. Members of ACC note that this recommendation clearly makes a distinction between communication and information. There are different views among the agencies and organizations with regard to the location of communication units within respective secretariats. Some members of the Committee believe that, in view of the increasing demand of Member States for better accountability, transparency and careful use of financial resources, the suggestion to locate communication units within programme divisions, as well as the proposal on the setting-up of such units within the policy-making divisions of agencies (see recommendation 4 (a)), can provide further impetus for the creation of a more appropriate mechanism for the improvement of information and communication systems. At the same time they caution that the above arrangements will not necessarily guarantee the rational use of resources and prevent the eventual proliferation of subsidiary bodies or the duplication of efforts. Other members of the Committee, while supporting in principle the Inspector's idea of a certain autonomy of these units, feel, however, that it should be left up to each agency or office as to whether or not to keep the unit within an information division. Nevertheless, all members of ACC are united in the view that, in either case, both information and communication units should work hand in hand, as they are affected by each other.

14. One member of the Committee would like to see the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) mentioned among the organizations where the communication unit is an autonomous one, in that the Education, Communication and Youth Branch of its secretariat is an integral part of the Technical and Evaluation Division and is clearly differentiated from the Information and External Relations Division.

Recommendation 3. Resources

Donor agencies should be invited to provide adequate resources to support and expand communication activities, in particular for participatory development initiatives.

15. ACC supports this recommendation in principle.

Recommendation 4. Coordination

In order to improve coordination in the area of communication by the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular those involved with development, action has to be taken on two levels, headquarters and country:

(a) Headquarters: An internal mechanism such as focal points should be established whereby departments would inform each other about the work done on communication in their respective units. In addition, since communication is a management process, it has to be part of all undertakings. There should be a unit within the policy-making division of agencies that would assume the responsibility of coordinating communication activities. The same unit should be the link at the inter-agency level;

(b) Country level: Coordination at the country level should be practical and flexible in order to respond to "on-the-spot" situations. Greater coordination at the country level should be sought by using fully the team of agency representatives within the resident coordinator system. For this purpose and in cooperation with Governments and other concerned parties, a communication coordinating committee could be established, including the chief technical adviser of the project, representatives from Governments, bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations and community leaders. It could be entrusted with the task of formulating communication policies, following up the implementation of these policies and preparing a joint report on the contribution of communication to the success of the project.

16. Most members of ACC agree with the Inspector's proposal that, in order to strengthen inter-agency coordination in the area of communication, all the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system should identify focal points at their respective headquarters for the purpose of facilitating intra-institutional dialogue and exchanging information. Some agencies, while agreeing in particular with the provisions of subparagraph (a) that communication and coordination should be ingrained in everyday work, as it is the main ingredient to smooth operations, caution the approach of establishing separate operational units for that purpose. Their argument is based on the belief that, in some cases, allocating the responsibility for development communication to a specific organizational unit or focal point may lead other

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units to believe that the matter falls outside their responsibility, and thus the intended integration of communication into all undertakings may not be achieved. This observation, however, in the view of those agencies, should not refer to specific information programmes that create and maintain information networks. For further views concerning recommendation 4 (a), see the comments related to recommendation 2 above.

17. With regard to subparagraph (b), members of the Committee have different views in connection with coordination at the country level. Some agencies fully endorse the need for a country mechanism such as a communication coordinating committee, whose task, in their view, should be to formulate not only communication policies, but also communication strategies. Others, as mentioned in paragraph 10 above, oppose the idea of the establishment of additional international bureaucratic mechanisms, taking into account the existence of such infrastructures as the resident coordinator and the Joint United Nations Information Committee, which can successfully carry out the coordinating functions at the country level.

Recommendation 5. Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

Communication at the field level involving popular participation of beneficiaries via local and international non-governmental organizations is one of the ways of ensuring the effectiveness of technical cooperation. The United Nations system should work more closely with development-oriented non-governmental organizations at the grass-roots level that have already proved to have sound communication channels with the beneficiaries.

18. ACC supports the proposal of the Inspector concerning closer work with development-oriented non-governmental organizations at the grass-roots level. These should be viewed as including workers' and employers' organizations. A number of members of the Committee note that they are already well under way with the implementation of the recommendation. In particular, to further enhance communication with the beneficiaries and thereby increase the effectiveness of technical cooperation activities, these organizations and agencies have been strengthening their cooperation with development-oriented non-governmental organizations in such areas as economic and social development, poverty alleviation, environment and sustainable development, integrated rural development and so on. They also stress that this recommendation should be read in conjunction with some proposals contained in the earlier report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the subject of cooperation with non-governmental organizations (A/49/122-E/1994/44, annex). One organization expressed its concern that the activities of the United Nations information centres and services had not been taken into account in connection with recommendation 5.

Recommendation 6. Round-table conference

At present, there is no regular forum whereby discussions are held and views exchanged on development and humanitarian assistance communication programmes. This has resulted in the evolution of an informal round-table conference for development communication. Consecutive round-table meetings have demonstrated a considerable amount of goodwill for practical cooperation.

The commitment and productivity of the experts' participation in the round tables have proved that times are ripe for a better organized system of coordination in order to cross agency boundaries, which have been recognized as barriers. To achieve this objective, the existing informal round-table process should be regularized. It should include all United Nations agencies and the regional economic commissions of the United Nations and take into account the mandate of UNESCO on communication.

19. Members of ACC consider this recommendation to be of great importance. However, some agencies believe that, while the idea to regularize the present informal round tables and extend them to all United Nations agencies, including the regional commissions, deserves to be supported, it is important to separate the purposes of exchanging views on communication and development, on one hand, and coordinating and maximizing the efficiency of communication programmes in the United Nations system, on the other. They note that an informal round table that includes representatives of all agencies, as well as members of the academic community and relevant non-governmental organizations, is useful for the purposes of developing innovative ideas and concepts relating to how development communication should be understood, as far as this concept has not yet been defined according to one universal standard. This body could also define ways to measure and evaluate the success of communication programmes; establish criteria to differentiate between communication structures and communication outcome; provide expertise not only on how communication efforts affect development outcomes, but also on the degree to which those outcomes are equitably achieved among nations and peoples of the world (also known as "information gaps" or "knowledge gaps"). In brief, it is the view of some members of the Committee that the informal round tables should remain a body that directs the conceptual areas of development communication, while the coordinating functions should be executed by a different body representing mostly the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. One organization asserted that this recommendation was unfortunately silent on existing mechanisms for inter-agency meetings on public information issues covering high-priority agenda items such as social and economic development, crime prevention and criminal justice, human rights, environment and sustainable development, women and development, population and refugees. Some members propose to include among the regular participants of the informal round-table process bilateral agencies, universities, non-governmental organizations active in the field of development communication, women, development planners and others. One agency believes that the round-table conferences on communication

and development should be organized exclusively in developing countries in order to be in tune with local conditions.

Recommendation 7. International Programme for the Development of Communication

The Inspector believes that in order to avoid duplication and promote a better use of resources, the Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication should look into the mandate of the Programme in order to enable it to respond more effectively to the needs of developing countries in the field of infrastructure-building and mass-media training. In the process of introducing possible changes, the following points, among others, should be taken into account:

(a) Improve the dissemination of information of the International Programme for the Development of Communication programmes to agencies through more effective means of communication;

(b) Ensure that development communication and training programmes attract more contributions from United Nations agencies, bilateral and multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, foundations and universities, in addition to the fund-raising efforts of the Programme.

20. ACC supports, in principle, the proposals of this recommendation related to the activities of the International Programme for the Development of Communication. The agencies recognize that the biennial work programme of UNESCO clearly spells out the assistance to member States through Programme and training activities. Working with national institutions for information and education, as well as within its national commissions, UNESCO responds effectively to the needs of developing countries mentioned in the above recommendation. At the same time, they note that it is not so much the mandate of the International Programme for the Development of Communication that is in question, given that the Programme, since its inception in 1980, has responded comprehensively to the call from developing countries for assistance in the development of their communication infrastructure. The points that are really at issue are, firstly, dissemination of information on projects of the Programme, and, secondly, a more concerted effort to diversify sources of assistance both in cash and in kind. These two points could be remedied by reinforcement of funds for information and diversified fund raising.

Recommendation 8. Training

(a) Owing to the fact that there is a lack of trained communication experts globally and in particular in developing countries, the organizations of the United Nations system should develop a systematic approach to training. Such training should benefit field workers/development agents and technicians, as well as communication planners and specialists at higher levels;

(b) Academic institutions in developing and developed countries should be encouraged to include curricula for development communication;

(c) With the aim of cost saving, the use of existing infrastructures and facilities of the United Nations system, namely, the ILO International Training Centre at Turin, should be considered by the appropriate ACC subsidiary body;

(d) The fund for financing these training programmes should be envisaged within the communication component budget and be allocated at the inception of projects.

21. Members of ACC are in full agreement with the provisions of this recommendation, including the proposal to use more effectively for training in the field of communication development the existing infrastructures and facilities of the United Nations system, in particular the ILO International Training Centre at Turin. One organization asserted that the activities of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, in particular its annual training programme for young broadcasters from developing countries, should have been mentioned in connection with this recommendation.

Recommendation 9. ACC classification

Because of the constant evolution in the field of communication and its strategic value in disseminating information and sharing knowledge, the ACC programme classification on communication extended for UNDP use should be redefined to respond to needs of the Member States. For this, in addition to the class entries proposed by UNESCO, FAO and UNFPA should also be consulted in order to ensure an integrated and harmonized set of categories.

22. Members of ACC welcome the proposal to extend and redefine the Committee's classification on communication, and express their readiness, in collaboration with UNESCO, FAO and UNFPA, to propose new entries to be considered by the appropriate ACC subsidiary body.

Recommendation 10. Peace-keeping operations

The United Nations has no specific structure in place for immediate action to deal with communication when a peace-keeping operation emerges. The Inspector, based on past experience, is convinced that it is imperative for the United Nations to have a stand-by unit equipped with a group of communication experts, which would be entrusted with the task of operating in the field from the beginning of the operation to cover the entire spectrum of communication/information requirements until the end of the operation. The unit would be mobile and report directly to the head of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. It should be established within the existing resources of the Department and work very closely with the Department of Public Information, benefiting from its existing decentralized structure, representatives of agencies and other media forums to improve coordination among the parties acting at the field level. Depending on the nature of the peace-keeping operation, specialized agencies, UNESCO in particular because of its specific mandate, and non-governmental organizations should also be on call for the Secretary-General and ready to put at the disposal of the United Nations their expertise in this field.

23. Members of ACC support this recommendation and assert that some of its provisions are already being implemented. The agencies underline that they stand ready to assist the Secretary-General to support peace-keeping operations within their respective mandates. Some members of the Committee note that they have special units that are already engaged in humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping and peacemaking operations, as in Haiti, Rwanda, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, the former republics of the Soviet Union, Cambodia and other parts of the world. Some members of the Committee appreciate the proposal of the Inspector concerning the conceptualization of the communication component of peace-keeping operations and humanitarian assistance (see para. 43 of his report) as completely different, though complementary, to that of public information.



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COORDINATION QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF THE COORDINATION BODIES

Annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for 1994

SUMMARY

The present report covers the work carried out by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and its subsidiary bodies in 1994, and endeavours to highlight policy issues requiring attention by Governments and by concerned intergovernmental bodies.

During the year, ACC continued to focus on policy issues relating to the division of labour within the United Nations system and to resource flows for development. It also paid particular attention to the challenge of African economic recovery and development, which was the focus of deliberations both at its second regular session and at the twenty-eighth series of Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and ACC.

As part of the effort to improve coherence and coordination within the system, considerable attention was devoted at the inter-agency level to system-wide preparations for major international conferences, including the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), and for the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. ACC also continued to monitor the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the substantive implementation of Agenda 21, and examined the implications of the

* E/1995/100.

World Conference on Human Rights for the work of the United Nations system. A succinct summary of the outcome of the ACC discussions in all these areas is provided in the present report.

The progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system is also reviewed, as are the developments in the provision of assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations. As in the past, the last two sections of the report cover the work of ACC on financial, administrative and personnel questions during the period and the main elements of the ACC programme in 1995.

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FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The current year, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, should be the occasion for a serious assessment of progress achieved and of the challenges facing the United Nations in the future.

I am convinced that the future of the Organization cannot be addressed in isolation from that of the wider United Nations system and the principles of cooperation and international solidarity which the system represents. The United Nations system is not just a form of international organization. Its diverse components constitute together a great and unique experiment in international cooperation which must be safeguarded; at the same time, priorities and methods of work must be continuously adapted to changing requirements.

I am equally convinced that an important factor affecting the common future of the United Nations system will be the extent to which it is able to develop - and is perceived as having achieved - a true unity of purpose and action, pursuing common objectives and priorities that have a visible impact on the policies of nations and the welfare of peoples.

Hence the importance of an effective system of inter-agency cooperation and coordination, geared to identifying the main policy issues facing the international community and to promoting and organizing on a continuing basis joint initiatives and responses around common priority objectives. These are the goals that have guided the reform of the ACC machinery initiated three years ago. Further advances in this direction are more important than ever, at a time of unprecedented demands on the system, but also of scarce resources and of challenges to multilateralism.

Progress towards a more coherent United Nations system also requires mutual confidence and a continuing dialogue between the secretariats of the system and the central intergovernmental bodies charged with setting overall policies for inter-agency coordination. The high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council provides an excellent opportunity for such interactions at the most senior level, which should be fully exploited. The experience at the twenty-eighth series of Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC has also been positive in this regard, having allowed for expert discussions and an encouraging convergence of views on programme topics of current interest and relevance.

Ultimately, the presence of coherent policy frameworks to which the membership is fully committed and which can guide decision-making by individual governing bodies as well as the work of ACC, is an essential prerequisite for qualitative improvements in inter-agency cooperation and coordination. The intergovernmental discussions which have been initiated on an Agenda for Development are highly relevant in this regard. Alongside these discussions, the continuum of conferences during 1994 and 1995, encompassing the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, can make a crucial contribution to those ends.

I am confident that ACC will continue to play its part in promoting a renewed consensus on these interrelated dimensions of development and, drawing on such a consensus, in leading an effective response by the secretariats of the system.

INTRODUCTION

A. Overview

1. The present report covers the work of ACC and its subsidiary machinery in 1994.
2. In response to a request by CPC, the report endeavours to highlight policy issues which appear to call for special attention by the concerned intergovernmental bodies.
3. Section I deals with the continuing consideration by ACC of policy issues concerning the division of labour within the system and related issues of resource flows for development. In section II, policies and priorities relating to African economic recovery and development are reviewed, based on the consideration of the subject by ACC itself and at the twenty-eighth series of Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC. Section III reviews the system-wide preparations for major conferences: the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), as well as the preparations for the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations; it also discusses the follow-up to UNCED and the World Conference on Human Rights. Section IV deals with the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system. Assistance provided by the United Nations system to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations is covered in section V. Section VI deals with financial, administrative and personnel questions and section VII outlines briefly the elements of ACC's work in 1995.

B. Issues for consideration by intergovernmental bodies

4. At its thirty-fourth session, in 1994, CPC noted that the Economic and Social Council was carrying out its coordination functions in the context of its high-level and coordination segments; considered that it could assist in the fulfilment of the Council's role by focusing its attention on programming and prioritization of issues; and requested that annual overview reports of ACC be directed towards providing the necessary information to assist CPC in fulfilling that function (A/49/16 (Part I), para. 69).
5. As ACC pursues its efforts to enhance the coherence of the activities of the secretariats of the United Nations system and presents the results to the relevant intergovernmental bodies, it will endeavour to highlight issues that need to be addressed by Governments, with emphasis on issues of policy coordination coming within the purview of the central intergovernmental bodies.
6. With regard to the division of labour within the system and cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, the conclusions so far drawn by ACC, as outlined in the present as well as in previous reports, have contributed to an

improved understanding of orientations and policies to be pursued, and of the outstanding problems to be addressed. As reiterated in the present report, an improved sharing of responsibilities and strengthened collaboration within the system require a clear articulation of common goals and a shared understanding of the problems to be tackled and the approaches to be followed. This implies a continuous and effective flow of information and exchange of views not only among the secretariats concerned but also among the relevant intergovernmental bodies. Indeed, a systematic, pragmatic and result-oriented dialogue among all the partners concerned is a necessary condition for a decentralized structure, such as that of the United Nations system, to achieve a qualitative strengthening of arrangements for cooperation across the wide range of issues addressed by it. CPC and the Economic and Social Council have a vital role in this regard.

7. ACC also concluded that access to an adequate level of resources constituted one of the primary problems facing the United Nations system. ACC emphasized that ensuring the access of specialized agencies to increased levels of resources was particularly important in order to maintain the required technical capacity of the system in support of development. The need to preserve the unique capacities of the smaller technical agencies was particularly stressed.

8. As regards African economic recovery and development, ACC, in identifying the priority issues that needed to be addressed at the national and international levels and the policy directions guiding the United Nations system, recognized that the scale of current efforts on the part of the system, and the international community in general, in no way matched the scale of the problems being faced in Africa and that a much higher level of commitment and resources at both the national and international levels would be required to overcome the African crisis. ACC thus called for urgent measures to increase official development assistance (ODA) flows to African countries, a reduction in the burden of external debt, as well as international support for African diversification and for the efforts of African countries to fully benefit from the opportunities created by the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.

9. One of the main issues, related to system-wide coordination, that has emerged from the work of ACC over the past year is how to maximize synergies and avoid duplication in the preparations for, and follow-up to, major international conferences organized by the United Nations. Following UNCED, the World Conference on Human Rights and the International Conference on Population and Development, all of which have had or will have far-reaching implications for the work of the entire United Nations system, inter-agency preparations were under way in 1994 for the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). As ACC pursues its effort to mobilize the contribution of the system in support of these conferences, the question increasingly arises as to how interlinkages among them can best be addressed. Each of these conferences entails or is likely to entail follow-up activities at the national, regional and international levels, including national reporting and reporting by agencies on several common or cross-cutting issues.

10. In order to reduce the burden of reporting but, more important, with a view to enhancing the coherence and impact of national and international actions, it appears increasingly necessary to articulate a common framework for action that takes into account relationships and linkages among the issues covered by these conferences and the recommendations emanating from them. While ACC has initiated work to this end, the development of such a framework will require the full attention of the intergovernmental bodies that have the responsibility for the follow-up to these conferences and should be a central concern of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. A closely related question is the relationship of these conferences to the elaboration of an Agenda for Development.

11. At a broader level, the need for enhanced inter-agency coherence in the whole area of peace-building, bearing in mind the essential role of economic and social development in conflict resolution and the maintenance of peace, has been stressed by the Secretary-General in the document entitled "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: position paper of the Secretary-General on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations" (A/50/60-S/1995/1). The Secretary-General states in that report:

"I shall maintain my efforts in the Administrative Committee on Coordination and in my bilateral relations with the executive heads of the various funds, programmes, offices and agencies to achieve better coordination within the United Nations system in the context of peace and security. Governments of Member States can support these efforts. Many of the problems of coordination arise from the mandates decreed for the agencies by discrete intergovernmental bodies. As such, they defy the capacity for inter-Secretariat coordination. I accordingly recommend that Governments instruct their representatives in the various intergovernmental bodies to ensure that proper coordination is recognized to be an essential condition for the Organization's success and that it is not made hostage to inter-institutional rivalry and competition" (para. 96).

12. The issue of the security and safety of United Nations staff and associated personnel serving in dangerous locations, in connection with the increasing operations of the United Nations system world wide, also requires close attention by the intergovernmental bodies concerned. At its second regular session of 1994, ACC adopted a statement on the subject, which was submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

I. POLICY ISSUES RELATING TO THE DIVISION OF LABOUR
WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND ACCESS TO
RESOURCES

13. During 1994, ACC continued its efforts to enhance the coherence and complementarity of actions by the organizations of the United Nations system in the context of its consideration of policy issues relating to the division of labour within the system and access to resources. This was a prominent item on the agenda of both the first and second regular sessions of 1994 of ACC.

14. ACC recognized that the issue of the division of labour within the system, understood in the sense of a more effective sharing of responsibilities and of enhanced coordination and complementarities, was of crucial importance and was indeed one of its raisons d'être. The issue had acquired particular relevance in the present context of rapid globalization of the world economy and the growing scarcity of resources, which made it all the more important for each organization to focus clearly on the core areas of its comparative strength and to collaborate with others to achieve greater complementarity in addressing cross-sectoral issues.

15. Common understandings on policy orientations and a clear articulation of common goals should form the basis for the sharing of responsibilities among organizations. Such common approaches should be devised and pursued by groups of concerned organizations around clusters of closely related issues in order to develop cooperative actions at the global, regional, subregional and country levels. Successful collaborative arrangements in such areas as primary health care, basic education, climate and chemicals should be emulated in other fields. The experience and lessons gained in developing a decentralized process of coordination for the follow-up to UNCED, through the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), should also be drawn upon in formulating system-wide responses to such other major initiatives as the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). Many issues calling for collaborative actions at the regional and subregional levels should be pursued, taking into account the role of the regional commissions.

16. ACC emphasized that economic, social and environmental aspects of development should be pursued simultaneously and in an integrated manner. This would in turn provide a framework for improving collaboration between the Bretton Woods institutions and the other organizations of the system. ACC noted that while issues relating to economic reforms and growth were being pursued with vigour and financial support, mainly from the Bretton Woods institutions, the pursuit of the social and environmental dimensions of development, including the protection of human rights, was lagging, owing to a lack of adequate resources and a proper appreciation of the linkages among the various dimensions of development. There was, therefore, a need to strengthen the role of the United Nations system in promoting social progress as an integral part of development and to enhance the coherence of policies and organizational structures at the national and international levels. In that respect, ACC again stressed the importance of the World Summit for Social Development, which should complement UNCED. Within the context of that overall framework, ways and means should be devised for greater use by the Bretton Woods institutions, in their technical cooperation activities, of the expertise available in the other specialized agencies.

17. In the view of ACC, access to adequate levels of resources continued to represent one of the primary problems facing the United Nations system. It was recognized that the capacity of the system for resource mobilization was affected by a variety of considerations and was influenced by the perception of the efficiency of the organizations of the system and the cost-effectiveness of their activities. The comparative advantages of the system inherent in its

universality, neutrality, multilateralism and internationally agreed objectives should therefore be reinforced by the system demonstrating its ability to take collaborative actions to enhance the efficacy of its activities. ACC noted that access to increased levels of resources was essential in order to maintain and strengthen the technical capacities of the specialized agencies in their respective areas of competence. In the same context, the special situation being faced by the smaller technical agencies and the need for their active involvement in the formulation of country strategies were highlighted. The need for the funding organizations and financial institutions to give greater attention to the regional and subregional dimensions of development, bearing in mind that many of the problems dealt with by those technical agencies were cross-boundary, was stressed.

18. The need for closer collaboration within the system to enhance linkages between emergency and short-term needs and long-term development goals was also widely stressed. It was pointed out that these two sets of activities should be considered a continuum for funding purposes.

19. ACC also called for the building-up of stronger partnerships between organizations of the system and other actors engaged in development, including regional development banks, regional and subregional organizations, bilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in order to improve the quality and impact of activities and expand their constituencies and public support.

20. In pursuing its consideration of those issues at its second regular session of 1994, ACC devoted particular attention to cooperative arrangements between the Bretton Woods institutions, on the one hand, and United Nations funds and programmes and other specialized agencies, including the smaller technical agencies, on the other.

21. ACC reiterated the fact that the resident coordinator system had a crucial leading role to play, in support of recipient Governments, in ensuring effective coordination among all development actors, including agencies and institutions that did not have field representation. It concluded that efforts to promote greater complementarity between the country strategy notes and the policy framework papers should be furthered in that context.

22. ACC considered that coordination efforts were best concentrated on (a) specific priority issues, situations and geographical regions and (b) the preparations for and follow-up to global conferences. Cooperative and complementary actions, especially at the regional and subregional levels, should be pursued, drawing on the specific roles and mandates of the various organizations and benefiting from the variety of approaches represented in the United Nations system.

23. ACC particularly stressed the need for close inter-agency cooperation in building national capacity on the basis of priorities established by Governments. Concerted, system-wide efforts at capacity-building were especially important in ensuring an effective transition from relief and rehabilitation to development. In the same context, emphasis was placed on infrastructure development and on the importance of the Bretton Woods

institutions, as well as the funds and operational programmes of the United Nations, making effective use of the expertise available in the smaller technical agencies and other relevant United Nations entities.

24. A number of specific suggestions and proposals were formulated, concerning both questions of interorganization cooperation and the identification of substantive development issues requiring special attention at the inter-agency level, which are now guiding the development of arrangements for follow-up action and were taken into account in the elaboration of conclusions and recommendations related to the Agenda for Development, submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session (see A/49/665).

II. AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

A. Consideration by ACC

25. ACC, in its discussion on African economic recovery and development, highlighted the following points:

(a) The continuing crisis of development in Africa was one of the greatest challenges facing the United Nations system and the entire international community. Confidence in the future of Africa should be restored and strengthened;

(b) The emergence of South Africa as an independent and multiracial country, growing regional and subregional cooperation and the positive economic performance of a number of African countries were encouraging developments. But current overall negative trends, if they were to be reversed, called for a momentous response from African countries and concerted support on a massive scale from the international community;

(c) The political and humanitarian problems in Africa that attracted so much public attention were a manifestation of a more deep-rooted and structural crisis that required concerted action by all partners in order to address its causes at the most fundamental level. Preventive action was not only a moral duty but also the most effective way of averting future crises, which caused human suffering, led to displaced populations and destroyed the basis for development. In situations of actual crisis, humanitarian assistance should be designed to ensure an effective continuum from relief to rehabilitation and longer-term development;

(d) A broad-based and stable political framework, security and stability together provided the foundation for long-term sustainable development. To that end, more creative and broader support should be provided for the efforts of African countries to further good governance and democracy, establish the rule of law and respect for human rights, and build sound and equitable systems for civil service and the administration of justice;

(e) A sound and stable macroeconomic policy framework that provided support for growth and employment was equally critical to success. Adjustment and development should proceed together because neither can succeed alone;

(f) In order to achieve essential food security, overcome the structural constraints inherent in current agricultural practices and better exploit existing potential, a new green revolution should be fostered to bring about both a massive improvement in water resources management and a major increase in the irrigation of arable land and in the application of scientific techniques to agricultural production;

(g) In the same context, environmental degradation and its negative implications for long-term development should be addressed by improving and enhancing capacities for the environmentally sound management of the natural resource base;

(h) Building a modern system of transport and communications, which was equally critical to overcoming logistical obstacles to development, called for regional approaches and long-term investments;

(i) Industrialization, which was essential for diversifying the production base and generating employment opportunities, especially for a rapidly growing urban population, required adopting measures to create an environment conducive to private investment, both domestic and foreign;

(j) The development of human resources and management capacity was central to success in all areas of action. It required a focus on adequate nutrition; a comprehensive health policy and strategy, including the control of widespread diseases; education for all and the formation of middle-level and higher-level skills and institutional capacity; and the creation of employment opportunities. The tide of rapid population growth should be stemmed by development strategies and family planning approaches that aimed at raising the status of women in society.

26. ACC stressed that the United Nations system should remain fully engaged in Africa. The organizations of the system, individually and collectively, had placed the highest priority on African development.

27. Many of the recent successes in Africa were mentioned, including eradicating apartheid in South Africa; averting famine in southern Africa; controlling diseases; meeting the emergency and humanitarian needs of countries in crisis; promoting regional initiatives and agreements; and extending policy advice and operational activities in many parts of the continent. The United Nations system should build on that experience by carefully analysing the elements of success and by constructing collaborative approaches around specific goals and objectives.

28. At the country level, it was also emphasized that the resident coordinator system provided an instrument for enhancing coordination around specific priority issues and goals. The policy framework papers and the structural adjustment programmes adopted by a large number of African countries provided an opportunity to further cooperation between the Bretton Woods institutions and

other organizations and bodies of the system - for example, in the context of developing the country strategy notes. Similarly, the strategies for poverty eradication being pursued by many organizations should provide a basis for stronger cooperation at the country level.

29. ACC recognized, however, that the scale of current efforts on the part of either the United Nations system or the international community in general, in no way matched the scale of the problems being faced in Africa. A much higher level of commitment and resources at both the national and international levels would be required to overcome the African crisis.

30. ACC was deeply concerned at the decline in ODA and called for urgent measures to increase ODA flows to African countries. A reduction in the burden of external debt of the African countries and support for better debt management, together with a greater mobilization of resources, should enable African countries to move forward from the phase of adjustment to development. International assistance was also needed to enable African countries to benefit fully from the trade opportunities created by the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and to minimize any short-term negative effects. Similarly, African efforts at diversification should be fully supported by the international community, particularly in terms of providing increased market access. The Committee stressed that the United Nations system should assist in mobilizing international support for such measures.

31. With regard to follow-up action, as suggested by the Secretary-General, ACC decided to set up, at its first regular session of 1995, a senior-level steering committee of ACC and a number of ad hoc groups in order to identify during the course of 1995, major inter-agency initiatives to be taken in support of Africa; develop country-level cooperation around specific issues and goals; build scenarios for the future; and define the policy options required for galvanizing international support for African economic recovery and development. The outcome of these initiatives will be covered in ACC's annual overview report for 1995.

**B. Results of the twenty-eighth series of Joint Meetings of
CPC and ACC**

32. The twenty-eighth series of Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC, which was devoted to the continuing crisis of development in Africa, presented an opportunity for a dialogue between government representatives and agency secretariats on forging a coordinated and effective response to the crisis in the region.

33. The Joint Meetings had a full debate on the critical situation of Africa. In their statements, members of CPC addressed a number of policy issues relating to African economic recovery and development and raised questions about the critical issues of resource mobilization and allocation, inter-agency coordination, particularly at the country and regional levels, and the need to build partnerships between the regional organizations and the United Nations system, as well as between the Bretton Woods institutions and other organizations of the system.

34. Representatives of the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in their statements, addressed many of the issues raised by members of CPC and briefed the Joint Meetings on the policies and strategies being pursued by their organizations in support of African development in their respective fields of competence and on the steps being taken by them to enhance inter-agency coordination and build partnerships with multilateral and bilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other development actors in support of African development.

35. The following broad conclusions were derived from the discussion:

(a) The Joint Meetings welcomed the conclusions and recommendations relating to the revised System-wide Plan of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, adopted by CPC at its thirty-fourth session (E/1994/123, para. 88), and the conclusions of ACC, adopted at its second regular session of 1994 (E/1994/123, para. 90);

(b) The Joint Meetings called upon the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to take all steps necessary for the effective implementation of the System-wide Plan of Action, in close cooperation with African Governments and the regional organizations concerned, taking into account the conclusions and recommendations of CPC and ACC;

(c) The Joint Meetings shared the deep concern expressed by ACC at the decline of ODA and called for urgent measures to increase ODA flows to Africa. It was generally agreed that a much higher level of commitment and resources, at both the national and international levels, would be required to overcome the African crisis. It was further emphasized that an adequate level of resources should be allocated for the effective implementation of the revised System-wide Plan of Action by the organizations of the United Nations system;

(d) It was recognized that a substantial reduction in the burden of external debt was essential to enable the African countries to restore sustained growth and development. International assistance was also needed to enable African countries to benefit fully from the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations and to minimize their short-term negative effects;

(e) The importance of diversification was stressed, as was the need for international support for the efforts of African countries to diversify their economies, including through greater market access; the need for a diversification facility was stressed;

(f) It was considered that good governance, including accountability and transparency, a sound and stable macroeconomic policy framework, consistent and effective policies for reform and structural adjustment, taking into account the social dimension, creation of favourable conditions for market-oriented development and foreign direct investment were equally critical to success;

(g) The need to achieve essential food security and develop the food and agricultural sector was emphasized. It was essential to overcome structural constraints inherent in current agricultural practices, to improve water

resources management, to increase the irrigation of arable land and to apply scientific techniques to agricultural production;

(h) It was noted that industrialization, which was essential for diversifying the production base and generating employment opportunities, especially for a rapidly growing urban population, required the adoption of measures to create an environment conducive to private investment;

(i) The importance of reversing environmental degradation and addressing its negative implications for long-term development was stressed. A call was made for improving and enhancing national capacities for the environmentally sound management of the natural resource base;

(j) It was noted that building human settlements, and a modern system of transport and communications, which were equally critical to overcoming logistical obstacles to development, called for regional approaches and long-term investments;

(k) The development of human resources and capacity-building was considered central to success in all areas of action. It required a focus on adequate nutrition; a comprehensive health policy and strategy, including the control of widespread diseases; education for all and the building of middle-level and higher-level skills and institutional capacity; and the creation of employment opportunities. The tide of rapid population growth had to be stemmed by development strategies and family planning approaches that aimed at raising the status of women in society;

(l) A unanimous call was made for enhanced and effective coordination among the organizations of the United Nations system, particularly at the field level, to ensure efficient delivery and optimum impact of programmes and projects. A call was made to fully utilize such instruments of coordination as the resident coordinator system, the country strategy notes, the programme approach, national execution and field committees. It was suggested that cooperation and partnership with regional organizations such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) should be strengthened; in this context, the coordinating role of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at the regional level was stressed. It was suggested that regular meetings of resident coordinators with ECA and OAU could enhance field-level coordination;

(m) The Joint Meetings emphasized the need to improve the image and highlight the successes that had been achieved in Africa.

III. SYSTEM-WIDE PREPARATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP TO CONFERENCES AND INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

36. An important part of inter-agency work during the year related to initiatives to mobilize the United Nations system in support of the preparations for major international conferences, including the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). Indeed, a powerful international development agenda is emerging

on an ongoing basis through the work of a continuum of United Nations conferences and summits. Effective and realistic mechanisms should be made available to implement goals established at these conferences.

37. In this connection, a common framework should be developed to follow up major United Nations conferences, past and future. Goals and targets in the economic and social development field endorsed by past international conferences and summits should be synthesized, costed, prioritized and placed in a reasonable time perspective for implementation.

A. International Conference on Population and Development

38. Inter-agency preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development were undertaken through an Ad Hoc Inter-agency Task Force comprising focal points especially designated by all organizations of the United Nations system concerned.

39. The Task Force was instrumental in keeping United Nations agencies, organizations and programmes abreast of preparations for the Conference and ensuring that the formulation of the draft Programme of Action of the Conference benefited fully from the contributions of the system and drew on analytical inputs and policy assessments of all the United Nations organizations concerned. This will, in turn, facilitate a concerted effort by the system to pursue effective implementation of the Programme of Action. Inter-agency initiatives under way to this end, including the outcome of ACC's consideration of the matter at its first regular session of 1995, will be covered in ACC's annual overview report for 1995.

B. World Summit for Social Development

40. In resolution 47/92, the General Assembly decided to convene a World Summit for Social Development and, inter alia, requested "the organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental organizations, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to contribute fully to the preparations for the Summit".

41. The Preparatory Committee for the Summit, at its first session, in January/February 1994, stressed the integrated nature of development and the critical role that various institutions, including those having financial responsibilities, should play within their sphere of competence for the successful preparation and follow-up of the World Summit for Social Development.

42. During the preparatory process, in addition to ACC's own deliberations on the issues before the Summit, several ad hoc inter-agency meetings on the Summit were held in 1993 and 1994. Agencies, programmes and organizations of the system submitted reports and contributions to the three sessions of the

Preparatory Committee, held in 1994 and 1995. The Secretariat also held informal briefings for agencies during sessions of the Preparatory Committee.

43. Throughout the process, United Nations organizations and agencies have been active in organizing meetings, workshops, seminars and panel discussions on subjects related to the Summit. They have also provided inputs to the Secretariat in the preparation of the draft Programme of Action for the Summit. The Summit is expected to have major implications for the policies and activities of practically all the organizations of the system.

C. Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace

44. For the past two years, promoting the effective participation of the United Nations system as a whole in the preparatory process for the Fourth World Conference on Women at the national, regional and international levels has been the main focus of the work of the Ad hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Women. In March 1994, the Meeting prepared a joint statement addressed to the Commission on the Status of Women concerning the Platform for Action to be adopted at the Conference.

45. In addition, informal inter-agency consultations have been convened by the Secretary-General of the Conference at frequent intervals to promote coordination of activities, share information and provide advice and inputs to the Conference secretariat regarding Conference preparations. At the request of the Conference secretariat, many United Nations agencies and organizations, in addition to commenting on drafts of the Platform for Action, have contributed extensively to the preparation of the documentation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, including Women in a Changing Economy: 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the updated edition of The World's Women.

46. United Nations agencies and organizations are also actively supporting preparatory activities at the national level, and played an active role in support of the five regional preparatory conferences convened under the auspices of the regional commissions of the United Nations.

D. United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

47. Many United Nations agencies and organizations are actively supporting and cooperating with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) in the substantive preparations for the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to be held at Istanbul in June 1996. Several of these organizations will sponsor or conduct specific activities for the Conference. Notable among such initiatives are a colloquium on women and children, to be conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund, together with the United Nations Development Fund for Women; an exhibition on good urban environment management practices, to be organized by the United Nations Population Fund; a symposium on alternative sewerage systems for large cities, to be sponsored by

the World Health Organization; and a symposium on cities in the twenty-first century: tolerance, citizenship and social integration, to be organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in cooperation with UNCHS. UNESCO will also report to the Conference on six to eight significant examples of inner city revitalization. At the national level, United Nations resident coordinators are actively participating in the preparatory activities for the Conference and are assisting in promoting South-South cooperation on urban management at the regional and global levels. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization will organize a colloquium on technological changes of industrial production and their effects on location. The United Nations University, through the World Institute for Development Economics Research, will organize a seminar on human settlements in the changing global political and economic processes and the World Bank will organize a colloquium on sustainability in urban development. Focal points, appointed in all of the organizations concerned, maintain close contact with UNCHS on these and other related issues.

E. Preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

48. During 1994, ACC continued to devote attention to system-wide preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. ACC members reiterated their commitment to cooperating actively with the United Nations in order to ensure that the observance of the anniversary served to enhance the image of, and generate support for, the United Nations system, and provided an opportunity to highlight its achievements and reflect on its future and the challenges before it.

49. ACC considered it important that the observance of the anniversary focus on substantive activities aimed at educating the public, building a wider constituency for the system and demonstrating its continued relevance for the future. To those ends, it should involve the widest possible participation at the intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental levels, including the academic community. Particular importance was attached to supporting, through the resident coordinators and with the participation of all interested agencies, activities to be undertaken by national committees at the country level.

F. Follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

50. Questions related to the follow-up to UNCED and the work of IACSD continued to be a standing item on the agenda of ACC in 1994.

51. IACSD focused on the allocation and sharing of responsibilities for the implementation of Agenda 21 by the United Nations system and on the monitoring of new and additional financial requirements of the organizations of the United Nations system for the implementation of the outcome of UNCED. IACSD also reviewed the results of the second session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and agreed on the actions required to further support the Commission's work. In that context, IACSD was concerned about promoting a more

balanced approach in relation to several aspects of the follow-up to UNCED, including:

(a) The need to achieve a better balance between environmental and development aspects of the follow-up to UNCED, and to promote, to that end, the more active involvement of national development and financial policy makers in the work of the Commission;

(b) The need to give greater attention, alongside global and transnational issues, to issues related to urgent regional and national aspects of sustainability;

(c) The need to establish a closer relationship between new proposals concerning sectoral programmes and the means necessary to implement them - for example, in relation to such cross-sectoral issues as finance and technology.

52. Pursuant to a decision adopted by ACC at its first regular session of 1994, IACSD launched an overall review of its functioning, leading to a full assessment of the response of the United Nations system to Agenda 21 in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly in 1997.

53. IACSD also considered matters related to the functioning of its Subcommittees on Water Resources and on Oceans and Coastal Areas and addressed, in a preliminary way, pending the outcome of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the implications for the system of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

54. Complementing the work of IACSD, joint initiatives aimed at furthering the implementation of Agenda 21 and of specific recommendations of the Commission continued to be developed within the United Nations system. The most recent of such initiatives include the elaboration of a joint United Nations programme for capacity-building related to transfer of environmentally sound technologies; activities, organized jointly by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in the area of trade, environment and sustainable development; preparations for a comprehensive assessment of water resources; further work on the elaboration of sustainable development indicators; and new initiatives in the areas of human settlements, toxic chemicals, and health and the environment.

55. At its second regular session of 1994, ACC reiterated its commitment to supporting the Commission on Sustainable Development, in particular through IACSD and its task managers. In so doing, ACC agreed with IACSD on the need to move from the present emphasis on reporting to a more operational and action-oriented phase in the response of the United Nations system to the implementation of Agenda 21. ACC also endorsed the conclusion of IACSD regarding the need to achieve a better balance between the environmental and development aspects of sustainable development in the work of the Commission and in the follow-up to UNCED in general.

56. ACC welcomed the analysis undertaken by IACSD of the policy implications for the United Nations system of the outcome of the second session of the

Commission on Sustainable Development. It encouraged all the organizations concerned to take the policy issues identified by IACSD fully into account in their work relating to Agenda 21.

57. ACC again shared the concern of IACSD that the increasingly heavy burden of reporting requirements emanating from the Commission and other intergovernmental bodies risked diverting the resources of secretariats from substantive work relating to the implementation of Agenda 21, and directed IACSD to expedite its consideration of proposals for streamlining such reporting.

58. ACC endorsed the recommendation of IACSD that its membership be open to all interested organizations of the United Nations system. It also welcomed the entry into force of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and noted that their implementation would have significant implications for the system as a whole.

G. Follow-up to the World Conference on Human Rights

59. At its first regular session of 1994, ACC considered the implications for the system of the outcome of the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna in June 1993.

60. ACC members reaffirmed their commitment to contributing actively to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Conference, within the framework of the mandates, resources and approved programmes of their respective organizations. This will be done by, inter alia:

(a) Assessing the impact of the strategies and policies of their organizations on the enjoyment of all human rights;

(b) Considering the feasibility of developing common indicators and guidelines for that purpose;

(c) Addressing periodically ways of furthering a coordinated approach by the United Nations system to the promotion and protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the most vulnerable in society, and to the incorporation of human rights concerns into strategies and programmes;

(d) Strengthening, making better use of and, where necessary, expanding existing consultative arrangements to provide a framework for the follow-up to the Conference that would facilitate priority-setting, exchanges of experience and coordination of ongoing activities within the United Nations system and with appropriate non-governmental organizations;

(e) Strengthening training programmes in human rights for international civil servants, especially those working in the fields of development, technical assistance, peacemaking and peace-building;

(f) Examining ways of facilitating a more systematic exchange of, and access to, relevant information within the system by, for example, establishing compatible databases;

(g) Supporting and cooperating with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in his system-wide coordination responsibilities.

IV. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

61. ACC, through its Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), continued to review progress achieved in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system, as well as of the relevant provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1994/33 on the operational activities segment of the Council and decision 1994/293 on the high-level meeting of the 1995 operational activities segment of the Council.

A. Triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system

62. At its fourth session, CCPOQ reviewed arrangements for the preparation of the 1995 comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development within the United Nations system. Committee members undertook to participate fully in all phases of the process, including the preparation of survey instruments, the conducting of field visits and the review of data and policy options. Final responsibility for the preparation of the report will rest, as in the past, with the Secretary-General.

63. Pending completion of the 1995 triennial policy review report, information on a number of sub-themes of operational activities is provided below.

Country strategy note

64. During 1994, interest on the part of Governments in the preparation of country strategy notes increased. This was reflected in the growing number of countries that, during the second part of 1994, confirmed their intention to launch a country strategy note process: some 68 to date. By the end of the year, one country had finished and officially adopted a note and 13 countries had produced final drafts. Another group of 25 countries was expected to finalize a first draft during the first half of 1995.

65. It is envisaged that a sufficient number of country strategy notes will be finalized during 1995 to allow a first, reliable assessment of their value as an instrument of coordination. As noted above, strong interest has been expressed by ACC in achieving greater complementarity between the country strategy notes and the policy framework papers prepared under the aegis of the Bretton Woods institutions.

Evaluation of the programme approach

66. CCPOQ noted that variations existed in operationalizing the programme approach, which implied that there was a need for different methods of monitoring and evaluation. The Committee invited the Inter-agency Working Group

on Evaluation to consider this issue in its review of guiding principles of a monitoring and evaluation methodology. The Group, at its meeting in December 1994, finalized guidelines on the subject for consideration by CCPOQ at its fifth session, in January/February 1995.

Training in operational activities

67. The programme of training in operational activities, involving both national officials and United Nations system staff, continued satisfactorily with the conducting of field coordination workshops for United Nations system representatives, follow-up workshops at the country level, capacity-building programmes in project formulation and management workshops for training "trainers". New terms of reference have been approved for the Advisory Panel on Training, which should lead to greater cooperation in this area within the system.

B. Resident coordinator system

68. CCPOQ continued its work aimed at strengthening the resident coordinator system and developing a consolidated statement on the role and functions of resident coordinators. Work on the updating of the terms of reference of resident coordinators and related elements, arising from General Assembly resolution 47/199, was carried out by a Working Group that met in December 1994. The results are to be reviewed by CCPOQ at its fifth session.

69. CCPOQ gave extensive consideration to the annual reports of the resident coordinators. It suggested that such reports should be focused in the future on selected themes and considered that greater emphasis should be placed on their collegial preparation under the responsibility of the resident coordinator. It was generally felt that greater use should be made of these reports by the United Nations development system and a more substantive response given to them.

70. With regard to resource requirements, both human and financial, of the resident coordinator system, the Committee noted that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was currently reviewing the costs of the exercise of the resident coordinator function by its resident representatives. It was agreed that innovative ways to finance the resident coordinator system should be developed and brought to the attention of ACC.

V. ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES INVOKING ARTICLE 50 OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS

71. In paragraph 65 of the report on the first part of its thirty-fourth session (A/49/16 (Part I)), CPC "stressed the importance of continuing the efforts of the Secretary-General, including in his capacity as Chairman of ACC, in mobilizing and coordinating assistance to countries invoking Article 50 of the Charter and requested him to continue those efforts and report on the outcome thereof in the next overview report of ACC". The countries referred to are those affected by the sanctions introduced by the Security Council against Iraq and the former Yugoslavia.

72. The background and substantive issues involved were described in the report of the Secretary-General prepared pursuant to the note by the President of the Security Council regarding the question of the special economic problems of States as a result of sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations (A/48/573-S/26705).

73. The efforts made by the United Nations system to provide assistance to the 21 affected States that had invoked Article 50 of the Charter in connection with the implementation of Security Council resolution 661 (1990) on sanctions against Iraq were first dealt with in the annual overview report of ACC for 1992 (E/1993/47/Add.1). The comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the application of Article 50 (A/48/573-S/26705) also contained detailed information on the assistance activities undertaken in this regard by the international financial institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)), the regional development banks and UNDP. Subsequently, the annual overview report of ACC for 1993 stated that, although emergency operations and special assistance projects on behalf of the 21 affected countries had been largely completed, ongoing activities of the relevant components of the United Nations system, within their competence and available resources, continued to take into account the special economic problems of the affected countries (E/1994/19, para. 60).

74. In 1994, the adjustment efforts of the 21 affected States deepened. The ongoing activities of the United Nations system in those countries and in areas most seriously affected by the Gulf crisis and its long-term effects continued to be pursued during the course of the year.

75. The annual overview report of ACC for 1993 also outlined the measures taken by the Secretary-General, and the activities carried out by the United Nations system, under Article 50 of the Charter, in response to the special economic problems of eight States adversely affected by the implementation of the Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (E/1994/19, paras. 61-66). Detailed information on the response of the United Nations system, with particular reference to the relevant activities of the World Bank and IMF, regional development banks and UNDP, including their participation in regional initiatives and follow-up arrangements under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, was also provided in the report of the Secretary-General on Economic Assistance to States affected by the implementation of the Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (A/49/356).

76. By resolution 49/21 A of 2 December 1994, the General Assembly, inter alia, having taken note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/356), and in particular the conclusions contained therein, recognized the urgent need for a concerted response from the international community to deal in a more effective manner with the special economic problems of the affected States in view of their magnitude and the adverse impact of the sanctions on those States; invited the international financial institutions to continue to pay special attention to the economic problems of the affected States arising from the implementation of the sanctions and the adverse social impact and to consider, inter alia (a) how the existing facilities of IMF might be helpful to the States concerned, with a

view to alleviating their special economic problems and (b) how consultative group meetings of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development on the countries in question, scheduled for 1995, might further help to mobilize additional resources to mitigate the losses and costs incurred by those countries; requested the competent organs, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to take into consideration, in programming their development activities, the special needs of the affected States and to consider providing assistance to the affected States from their special programme resources; and requested the Secretary-General to continue to seek, on a regular basis, information from States and the concerned organs and agencies of the United Nations system on action taken to alleviate the special economic problems of the affected States and to report thereon to the Security Council, as well as to submit a report on the implementation of the resolution to the Assembly at its fiftieth session.

77. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General will submit to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session a further report containing information received from the relevant entities of the United Nations system.

78. In a related development, the General Assembly, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 49/58 of 9 December 1994, on the report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, invited the Secretary-General to submit, before the session of the Committee in 1995, a report on the question of the implementation of the provisions of the Charter, including Article 50, related to the special economic problems confronting States and arising from the carrying out of sanctions mandated under Chapter VII of the Charter, analysing the proposals and suggestions on this issue contained in the report of the Committee on its 1994 session (A/49/33), giving due attention to possible practical ways and means of carrying any of them out. In paragraph 4 (a) (i) of the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Special Committee, at its session in 1995, to continue to consider on a priority basis proposals on the implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, including the working paper submitted in this regard to the Special Committee during its last session (A/AC.182/L.79).

79. Most recently, in the document entitled "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: position paper of the Secretary-General on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations" (A/50/60-S/1995/1), in the context of instruments for peace and security "where unforeseen, or only partly foreseen, difficulties have arisen and where there is a need for the Member States to take the 'hard decisions'", the Secretary-General highlighted key issues in the area of sanctions. In paragraph 73 of the document, the Secretary-General stated:

"there is an urgent need for action to respond to the expectations raised by Article 50 of the Charter. Sanctions are a measure taken collectively by the United Nations to maintain or restore international peace and security. The costs involved in their application, like other such costs (e.g. for peacemaking and peace-keeping activities), should be borne equitably by all Member States and not exclusively by the few who have the

misfortune to be neighbours or major economic partners of the target country".

80. In order to address the problems in the area of sanctions, the Secretary-General suggested the establishment of a mechanism to carry out the following five functions:

(a) To assess, at the request of the Security Council, and before sanctions are imposed, their potential impact on the target country and on third countries;

(b) To monitor application of the sanctions;

(c) To measure their effects in order to enable the Security Council to fine-tune them with a view to maximizing their political impact and minimizing collateral damage;

(d) To ensure the delivery of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups;

(e) To explore ways of assisting Member States that are suffering collateral damage and to evaluate claims submitted by such States under Article 50.

81. While, in view of its purpose of assisting the Security Council, this mechanism would have to be located in the United Nations Secretariat, it should be empowered to utilize the expertise available throughout the United Nations system, in particular that of the Bretton Woods institutions. To this end, Member States will have to give the proposal their political support both at the United Nations and in the intergovernmental bodies of the agencies concerned if it is to be implemented effectively.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

A. Personnel issues

Performance management

82. ACC, at its second regular session of 1994, reviewed proposals submitted by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) for the development of a strategy to improve managerial effectiveness and accountability within the system at all levels, through objective performance appraisal systems, appropriate rewards and sanctions and effective training programmes.

83. ACC endorsed CCAQ's initiative in developing a prototype appraisal report form, based on performance objectives and individual competencies, and accompanying guidelines, and encouraged those organizations that had not yet done so to introduce more rigorous performance appraisals for all levels of staff. Progress to this end will be reviewed in 1995.

Study of the application of the Noblemaire principle

84. At both its first and second regular sessions of 1994, ACC expressed concern at the continued lack of competitiveness of the conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories of staff of the organizations of the United Nations system. ACC appreciated and welcomed the decision of the General Assembly, in resolution 47/216, to request the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to study all aspects of the application of the Noblemaire principle with a view to ensuring the competitiveness of the United Nations common system, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

85. ACC regretted that the ICSC response to that request had been confined to a number of technical adjustments of a minor nature and considered that such a limited and fragmented approach did not respond to the letter and spirit of the Assembly's request.

86. Recalling that a reappraisal of the 1921 principle, on which common system remuneration is based, was long overdue, ACC reiterated its concern that the current remuneration system was outdated and needed to be overhauled to become competitive with bilateral and other multilateral financial and aid agencies. This was, in the view of ACC, particularly important at a time when new demands, involving increasingly diverse and complex programmes, were being placed on the system.

87. ACC emphasized that its basic concern was to achieve a significant updating of the application of the Noblemaire principle that would reflect, inter alia, the internationalization of the labour force. The remuneration levels offered by other international employers, such as the Bretton Woods institutions and some other regional intergovernmental organizations, were known to be more competitive than those of the common system.

88. ACC noted that ICSC had been provided with a comparative analysis of the structure and programmes of work of three groups of international organizations and those of the United Nations common system and with a historical analysis of the compensation policies of the United Nations. Those analyses, inter alia, had led to a number of conclusions: that the consistent thread of pay policy was the need to attract and retain staff of a high level of competence; that there was nothing to prevent a re-determination of the manner in which the Noblemaire principle was currently applied in the framework of the United Nations common system of salaries, allowances and other conditions of service; and that there were significant similarities between the activities of the United Nations and those of the three international civil services (the World Bank, the coordinated organizations and the European Union) which competed with the United Nations for staff.

89. ACC considered that ICSC's inaction in responding to requests of the Assembly and the executive heads of the common system could not be justified on the grounds of lack of information or technical support from organizations, which had been thorough and extensive. ACC therefore strongly urged ICSC to finalize the studies mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 47/216 and to submit them to ACC for consideration at its first regular session of 1995.

Safety and security of United Nations staff and associated personnel

90. ACC discussed extensively issues related to the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel. ACC members, for whom the security and safety of staff was a matter of paramount importance, expressed appreciation for the work of the office of the United Nations Security Coordinator and had an extensive discussion on strengthening measures to protect the lives of United Nations staff operating in dangerous locations and on policies governing staff evacuation.

91. ACC welcomed the initiative of the General Assembly to conclude a convention on security and safety of United Nations staff and associated personnel. ACC expressed deep concern, however, that the current wording of those articles of the revised negotiating text of the draft convention covering the scope of application and definitions would exclude from the purview of the proposed convention most regular or emergency activities of United Nations programmes and specialized agencies that did not constitute a part of a peace-keeping operation, even though such activities were usually carried out in parallel with peace-keeping operations. ACC also pointed out that there were numerous situations in which the activities of the United Nations system, including emergency relief operations, were not being carried out under Security Council mandates in conjunction with a peace-keeping operation. Moreover, in many cases emergency relief or other United Nations activities started well before the Security Council addressed the situation in certain countries and mandated peace-keeping operations.

92. Noting that the majority of staff in the field were carrying out activities mandated by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council or the governing organs of United Nations programmes, funds or specialized agencies that were an integral part of the overall objectives of the United Nations system, ACC pointed out that the work of such personnel was often no less dangerous than the work of those involved in peace-keeping operations.

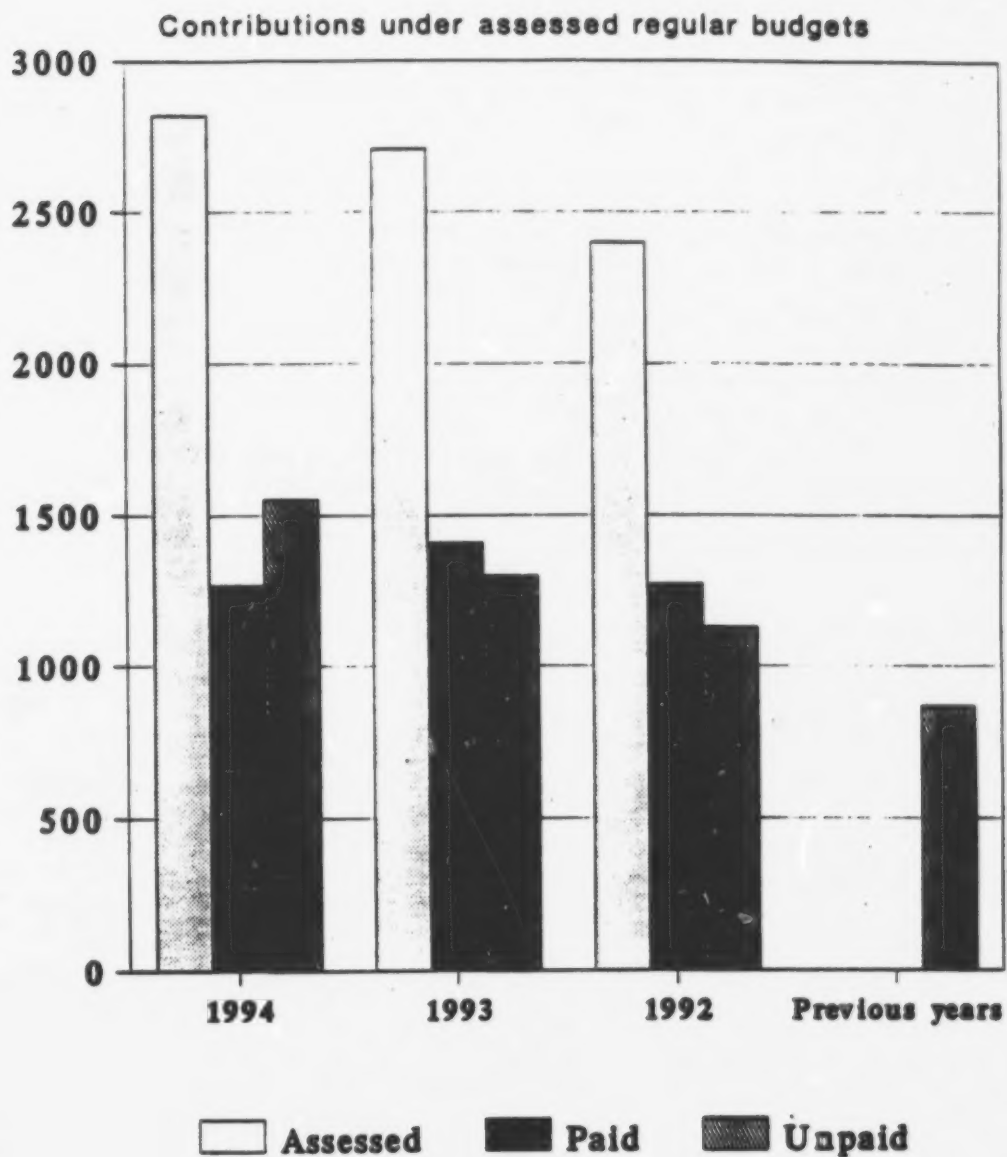
93. Stressing the importance of protecting the hundreds of dedicated staff members who put their lives at risk in the service of the United Nations system, ACC expressed the view that all staff members serving with the organizations of the United Nations system should be covered under the convention.

B. Financial issues

Financial situation of organizations of the United Nations system

94. ACC continued to review the financial situation of organizations of the system in 1994. Statistics collected under the auspices of ACC (see the figure) indicated that at 30 June 1994, some \$1,552 million or over 55 per cent of total contributions due for the year under assessed regular budgets had not been paid, although the financial regulations of organizations with assessed budgets generally provided that contributions were due and payable on 1 January of the year to which they related. Unpaid contributions at the same date in 1993 amounted to almost \$1,300 million (48 per cent of total assessments for 1993) and in 1992, to \$1,128 million (47 per cent of total assessments for 1992).

Financial Situation of Organizations of the United Nations System (In millions of US Dollars)



Cumulative arrears of assessed regular budget contributions for prior years amounted to some \$867 million, or about 31 per cent of assessed contributions for 1994 at the same date. While many major contributors scrupulously fulfilled their financial obligations, a considerable portion of outstanding contributions for both current and prior years was attributable to the non-payment by some major contributors. In this context, the annual review by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions) (CCAQ (FB)) of the functioning of the existing incentive and penalty schemes, designed to accelerate the payment of assessed contributions, confirmed previous conclusions that while penalty schemes remained generally effective, the usefulness of incentive schemes in obtaining the objective appeared doubtful.

95. For the United Nations, the general financial situation remained precarious, particularly with regard to the receipt of assessed contributions for peace-keeping activities. Organizations with technical cooperation programmes continued to suffer as a result of the stagnation in voluntary contributions to UNDP and the increase in the national execution modality.

Harmonization of financial statements

96. In the context of the continuing evolution of the common accounting standards published in 1993, ACC began work in 1994 on standards for the harmonization of financial statements. Two meetings of senior accounting specialists from organizations of the system were convened and monitored by CCAQ (FB) and an informal meeting was held with the Technical Group of the Panel of External Auditors of the United Nations to discuss the progress of the work. These meetings resulted in the production of a first draft of the standards, which are expected to be finalized by the end of 1995.

Statistical reports

97. In accordance with General Assembly decision 47/449 of 22 December 1992, ACC submitted to the Assembly, at its forty-ninth session, the third report on the budgetary and financial situation of organizations of the United Nations system (A/49/588), containing system-wide information on regular budgets and assessed contributions, working capital funds and expenditure and receipt of voluntary contributions. Taking account of comments made during the discussion on the second report (A/47/746), additional detailed data concerning assessed and voluntary contributions by States were included to replace data which had, in the past, been provided to the Committee on Contributions.

Other financial issues

98. In the course of its work on budgetary, financial and related questions in 1994, ACC also, inter alia:

(a) Carried out a comprehensive review of the cost-sharing arrangements for jointly financed activities, particularly with regard to those where the volume of activity of participating organizations appeared to be the most relevant consideration;

(b) Assembled and reviewed extensive data on the cost of organizations' health insurance schemes, including additional data on cost-containment measures and the potential liability of organizations for health insurance for retirees, in the context of a continuing review of the control of such costs;

(c) Continued confidential interorganizational discussions on means of prevention and detection of fraud;

(d) Continued to keep under review arrangements with the Commission of the European Communities concerning administrative and financial conditions for humanitarian and operational activities financed by the Commission and implemented by organizations of the United Nations system.

VII. ELEMENTS OF THE ACC PROGRAMME IN 1995

99. During 1995, ACC will continue its consideration of policy issues relating to the division of labour within the United Nations system and the strengthening of cooperation between the Bretton Woods institutions and other organizations of the system. It will also follow up on the discussions held in 1994, in ACC and at the twenty-eighth series of Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC, which was devoted to African economic recovery and development.

100. The implications of the World Summit for Social Development for the work of the system will undoubtedly figure prominently on the ACC agenda. Other programme areas which are expected to receive focused attention by ACC in 1995 include population and development, in the wake of the International Conference on Population and Development, and drug abuse control.

101. As part of its continuing consideration of key management issues facing the system and in connection with the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, ACC is expected to give special consideration, during the first half of the year, to issues relating to the status of women in the secretariats of the United Nations system.

102. As a contribution to the process of debate and reflection on the response of the United Nations system to the new challenges facing it, which is taking place during the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, a forum on the future of the system is to be held in Vienna in conjunction with the first regular session of 1995 of ACC.

103. As in the past, the programme of work of ACC and its subsidiary machinery will be adjusted and geared to providing inter-agency support to the appropriate intergovernmental bodies in their consideration of issues of system-wide concern, particularly the issues to be selected by the Economic and Social Council for its high-level, coordination and operational activities segments.

104. In line with the objectives that have guided the recent restructuring of the intersecretariat coordination machinery, members of ACC, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, will pursue further measures to strengthen the contribution of ACC to enhancing the coherence and impact of the work of the system. As part of this effort, it is intended to make greater use

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of small task forces at the executive-head level, focusing on critical development issues, and to develop joint programmes based on common policies for implementation at the country level.
